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RELIGION IN ENGLAND.

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RELIGION IN ENGLAND

UNDER

QUEEN ANNE AND THE GEORGES.

1702–1800.

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BY

JOHN STOUGHTON, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF "ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND," ETC.

VOLUME I.

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PREFACE.

My object in preparing these volumes is to present a general view of national life under its religious aspects during the last century. It is common enough to compile histories of the Established Church, or of some one of our ecclesiastical denominations ; but the work now published deviates from that track, and aims at representing a more comprehensive view, including the action of Government, the conduct of representative men, and the habits of society in relation to diversified parties in this free country. What is generally understood by a history of the Church, or by histories of Churches, regards chiefly, if not

entirely, leaders, laws, organizations and controversies of a strictly ecclesiastical kind. Such particulars, of course, find a place in the following pages; but attention is largely turned to what constitutes the religious life of the people; that is something over and above ecclesiastical arrangements and dogmatic creeds, in certain cases it is even independent of them. Important sources of information are found, not only in Acts of Parliament, the proceedings of Convocation, the lives of bishops and other official personages, worship celebrated in cathedrals and parish edifices, theological books published by eminent divines, and the origin and progress of great societies which have made a broad deep mark on the annals of England; but also in the personal experiences of pious laymen, domestic scenes in mansions and cottages, the appearance of old meeting-houses and services conducted within their walls, open-air preach-

ing, the silent worship of Friends, and traces of the existence of Roman Catholic chapels, together with reports of religious conversation and relics of religious correspondence amongst our forefathers. Subjects of this description afford numerous illustrations of religion in England under Queen Anne and the Georges.

The history of the last century cannot be properly understood without a careful remembrance of what happened in the century before; that story I have attempted to tell in volumes already published. The religion of the eighteenth century had its roots in the seventeenth. The Puritans of the Commonwealth and the Caroline divines were fathers to the Dissenters and Churchmen of Hanoverian times. But under George II. there came an outburst of religious zeal in this country, which bore an original impress and possessed a character not transmitted from a former age. To that wonderful movement I have paid much attention,

not from any sectarian bias, but simply as an act of historical justice. Methodism, in all its branches, is a fact in the history of England, which develops into large and still larger dimensions as time rolls on; this must be felt by every impartial historian, whatever may be his own private opinions.

Foreign influences on English Christianity are also traceable during the period under review. The French Huguenots and the Moravian Brethren contributed more or less to shape the story here told; and the literature of Germany began to be a factor in English religious thought before the year 1800, though not to the extent it has reached within our own time. The same may be said of American theology. Moreover, English Christianity has, in many ways, influenced religion in other parts of the world, especially the United States; and foreign missionary operations began at the close of the last century not

only to affect the heathen world, but to tinge English religious life, both in churches and in homes. These circumstances will be found noticed; some of them for want of space are but lightly touched.

Unpublished MSS. and scarce tracts in the libraries of Lambeth, Grafton Street, and New College,[1] have been laid under contribution in this work; also Church records and other documents, together with a considerable collection of local Nonconformist histories in my own possession; as well as family traditions and recollections of anecdotes communicated in my early days by personal friends, acquainted with the celebrities and familiar with the religious life of the eighteenth century.

[1] In the Library of that Institution is a large collection of Funeral Sermons, containing above six hundred, relative to the period embraced in these volumes. Several of them are noticed in the following pages. The two mentioned on p. 217, vol. i., are misdated: Dr. Watts' discourse for Sarah Abney was delivered in 1732; and Mr. Price's for Lady, or Dame Mary, in 1749.

Before closing this account of the scope contemplated in these volumes, I may be permitted to remark that, according to English conceptions of literary work, the first duty of the historian is to give an impartial statement of facts, whether they tell for or against any distinctive opinions he may happen to hold. Such a duty I have in this, as in former publications, honestly laboured to discharge. But it is impossible thoughtfully to study history without recognising the laws of sequence which underlie the course of events, especially those two great causative forces: the individual character of great men, and currents of public opinion, the sources of which in some respects it may be difficult to discover. These have not been overlooked in the studies out of which this History has arisen. They have been kept in sight, where they are not explicitly presented. To what is called the philosophy of history, these volumes make no pretension.

It lies beyond the path which is here selected. The philosophy of political history is sure to run into regions of political science; and the philosophy of religious history leads into realms of theological debate. Thus to be philosophical is to be polemical; and polemical discussion, properly so called, I have wished to avoid; yet I trust I have never for a moment lost my deep conviction of the providence and grace of Almighty God in the story of human events from first to last.

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RELIGION IN ENGLAND UNDER QUEEN ANNE.

CHAPTER I.

1702-3.

ANNE succeeded her brother-in-law, on Sunday, the 8th of March, 1702. Bishop Burnet attended William's death-bed, in Kensington Palace, and, together with Archbishop Tenison, administered to him the Holy Communion. After watching through a long night the ebbing sands of the sovereign's life, he joined in the last commendatory prayer; and then, at the moment of his master's decease, hastened with the tidings to St. James' Palace. There resided the heiress to the crown; and at her feet he "prostrated himself, full of joy and duty," as he announced her accession. The message must have been more acceptable than the messenger; for her ecclesiastical, as well as her political sentiments, were by no means in accordance with those of the Whig bishop.

Born in 1665, daughter of the Duke of York, afterwards James II., and his first wife, Anne Hyde, she had not been educated in the Roman Catholic faith, to which both her parents were attached,—the protestant feeling of the country prevented that; but her mind early became imbued with Anglo-

Catholic feeling. As a girl she conceived a warm attachment to the Church of England, and as she rose into life she resisted the attempts of those who endeavoured to bring her over to the Church of Rome. The regularity with which she monthly received the Lord's Supper, according to Anglican rites, has been especially noticed; and her whole life proved her zealous devotion to the Creeds, the Articles, and the formularies of the Established Church.[1] She married George, Prince of Denmark, in 1683, and his influence as a Lutheran, whilst it would not tend to diminish her reverence for Episcopacy, — since Lutheran superintendents in that country, are essentially bishops,—certainly would not serve to lower any High views she might hold of the nature and efficacy of the two sacraments.

The inferiority of her intellectual powers, her narrow sympathies, and her prejudiced opinions, have been too often exposed to be ever forgotten; but her domestic affections were strong and pure. As a wife and mother, no stain has ever touched her character; and the loss of child after child was a trial she sorely felt. Everybody is acquainted with the story of her intimate friendship with the Duchess of Marlborough, and in many of its details it shows not only the feebleness of her understanding, but

[1] Stanhope's "Reign of Queen Anne," vol. i. p. 42.

the warmth of her heart; not only her submission to another's will, but her earnest craving for another's sympathy.

The influence of queen Sarah over Queen Anne no doubt was immense, but it was in political more than in religious matters. Her diligence in attending on religious worship in general, and her reverential behaviour in the House of God, were the more noticeable in an age when such habits, at least amongst the upper classes, were far from being so common as they are now. Dean Swift describes the Duchess as a "lady not without some degree of wit, which she shows by the usual mode of the times, in arguing against religion, and endeavouring to prove the doctrines of Christianity impossible." If that description be at all true, the stronger mind did not so control the weaker, as to impart any corresponding scepticism; and, from what will appear hereafter, the queen's friend did not, to any great extent, influence her in the distribution of church patronage. That patronage, it may be observed, after having been entrusted by William to a commission, was, immediately after his decease, taken by Anne into her own hands.

Three days after her accession she met the Houses of Parliament. Most favourable was the impression she made by her speech to the Lords and Commons. The royal lady earned the title of "good Queen Anne" mainly by her pleasant manners, whereas William,

with all his wisdom, and liberality as a constitutional monarch, left, by his reserved behaviour, an unfavourable impression on the minds of his people. Amongst the multitude who approached the throne, were the Presbyterian, Independent and Baptist ministers of London.[1] No reply, such as had been given by former sovereigns on similar occasions, appears to have been afforded to this address; and the royal silence was construed as an ungracious reception, out of harmony with the courtesies eulogized by Burnet. In her speech from the throne, at the prorogation of William's Parliament in May, Anne declared :—"I shall be very careful to preserve and maintain the Act of Toleration, and to set the minds of all my people at quiet; my own principles must always keep me entirely firm to the interest and religion of the Church of England, and will incline me to countenance those who have the truest zeal to support it." The second clause modified the first, and left no doubt as to the objects of royal favouritism.

Soon after the queen came to the throne, she ostentatiously revived a custom which, by the zealous defenders of the Divine right of royalty, was reverenced as a proof, no less than an assertion, of the legitimacy of her title. The royal touch had

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[1] The Address is printed in Calamy's "Abridgment of Baxter's Life," etc., p. 621.

of old been regarded as efficacious, and the later Stuarts, according to an elaborate formulary, had been used on a large scale to comply with the request of their subjects for the exercise of this curious prerogative. William the Third had wisely discouraged the superstition, because, as the Jacobites said, not being a true successor to the throne he did not possess the Divine gift; but Anne, being a Stuart, was believed to inherit it, though how that could be, when on Jacobite principles her nephew, the Pretender, was entitled to the crown, is not apparent. At all events, "touching for the evil" became again a popular ceremony. Multitudes came, if not to be healed, still to see her majesty, and to receive her silver token; and every one is familiar with the anecdote of Dr. Johnson, who used to speak of his being touched, saying, "he had a confused, but somehow a solemn recollection of a lady in diamonds and a long black hood." Encouraged by the flattery of courtiers, she from time to time went through the absurd ceremonial. The newspapers proclaimed what she did, and so increased the number of applicants. Twenty persons are mentioned as having been touched at St. James', just before Christmas Day.

Anne's coronation took place on St. George's Day, the 23rd of April. Two regnant queens of England had been crowned long years before. Mary the First, according to the Romanist cere-

monial; Elizabeth, according to a ceremonial partly Romanist and partly Reformed. In both instances the rites were maimed. No Primate placed the crown on the royal brow. The two Archbishops were in prison when Mary was crowned. Canterbury was vacant, and the Archbishop of York would not use any part of the English Liturgy, in the case of Elizabeth. The second Mary, too, together with her husband, had to be content with the offices of the Bishop of London, Archbishop Sancroft refusing to officiate. Anne was the first queen regnant to enjoy the services of the Primate of All England, and in this instance, both Archbishops took part in the solemnity. One place only was vacant, that of the Bishop of Bath and Wells; Ken having been superseded by Kidder, and Kidder being at the time in disgrace. Now, for the first time, was used the full Protestant Service at the coronation of a queen crowned alone.

Archbishop Tenison uttered the words of recognition, presenting Anne as queen. Then came the English shout, in a clear ringing tone, "God save Queen Anne!" after which the trumpets sounded, and then followed the Litany. Next the Communion Service was read, as far as the Nicene Creed; then came the sermon, preached by Sharpe, Archbishop of York, and pronounced by Bishop Burnet, "good and wise." The coronation oath was administered, and immediately the great Bible,

which had been carried in the procession, was brought from the altar, by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the queen, who solemnly kissed it.[1] After the anointing, the choir sang the "*Veni Creator Spiritus*," and after another prayer, the coronation anthem followed. The ermine mantle removed, the queen sitting in St. Edward's chair, the rite of anointing, with other significant ceremonies, ensued; and after another burst of "God save the Queen," a Benediction was pronounced, and the Te Deum sung. The enthronization took place afterwards, together with the homage of the peers; and after another shout had rung through the arches of the old Abbey, the remainder of the Communion Service was completed.

The next public occasion on which we meet her majesty, in connection with the Church, is at Oxford, at that time the High Church seminary of learning. She was conducted in state by the vice-chancellor, doctors, and masters, all in their robes, to her lodgings in Christ Church, and was next day escorted to the Convocation House, where she witnessed the conferring of Degrees; afterwards, according to custom, she accepted the present of

[1] The introduction of the Bible on such occasions is said to have originated in the time of Edward VI. Whether or not the Bible was presented then, we certainly find it employed at the inauguration of Oliver Cromwell in Westminster Hall, as Lord Protector.

"a Bible, a Common Prayer Book, and a pair of gloves."

After visiting Oxford she went to Bath. "Her Majesty was met at Hyde Park, within half a mile of the city, by a handsome company of the citizens, all clad like grenadiers, and above two hundred virgins richly attired; many of them like Amazons with bows and arrows, and others with gilt sceptres and other ensigns of the Regalia in their hands; all of them with a set of dancers who danced by the sides of Her Majesty's coach. All the streets were illuminated, and a great number of flambeaux were carried."[1] At Bristol also there were great rejoicings.

Queen Anne appears on a more distinctly religious occasion than that at Oxford, when we find her in the new cathedral of St. Paul's, on the 12th of November, returning thanks for the Earl of Marlborough's successes in the Low Countries. There we see her on the throne, "exactly as in the House of Lords," on a platform covered with a Persian carpet,—"an armed chair, with a fald-stool before it, and a desk for the queen's book, covered with crimson velvet richly embroidered and fringed with gold, with a cushion thereon of the same." These descriptive words occur in the royal proclamation of the service, and they indicate the su-

[1] Stanhope's "Queen Anne," vol. i. p. 70.

premacy which her majesty claimed in the Church, as well as the supremacy which she exercised in the State. Both Houses of Parliament, the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London, the Foreign Ministers, the Bishop of the Diocese, the Dean and the Prebendaries were all present in their appropriate places,—the whole symbolical of the union, established by law, between the temporal and spiritual powers of the realm. A sermon was preached by Bishop Trelawny, who took for his text the 9th verse of the 23rd Chapter of Joshua: "But as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day." And the discourse was said to be "excellent." At a later period, 1704, her majesty visited St. Paul's to celebrate the victory of Blenheim, with like ceremony and like significance. And again she went, in 1705, after the forcing of the French lines by the hero of Blenheim; once more the ceremony occurred, in 1706, after the battle of Ramilies; and in 1707 there was a loyal thanksgiving for signal successes achieved by the English army. In 1713 thanks were returned for the peace of Utrecht, by both Houses, in St. Paul's Cathedral, when her majesty preferred to offer her devotions privately in her own palace.[1]

Previous to the service in St. Paul's at the close of the year 1702, the queen appeared at the open-

[1] Milman's "Annals of St. Paul's," p. 429.

ing of her new parliament, when she made the following remark bearing on the religion of the country, —"I am resolved to defend and maintain the Church as by law established, and to protect you in the full enjoyment of your rights and liberties, so I rely upon your care of me; my interests and yours are inseparable, and my endeavours shall never be wanting to make you all safe and happy." Before this it became apparent what policy, in Church as well as in State, found favour with the new sovereign. Whigs were in office when William died—many were allowed to remain at their posts—but very soon decided Tories rose to a participation in office, and distinctly indicated the new current in the administration of affairs. Other unmistakeable circumstances proved that a change had come.

There was "a spirit in the air" which it is proper at once distinctly to notice. It will be best perceived and understood by a survey of parties, and by an examination as to the main streams of religious thought and feeling in the second and third years of the eighteenth century. The Low Church party had been in the ascendant at the Revolution, and continued to be so, more or less, through the reign of William III. That party wished to have the established religion under the control of the State; accordingly they were reproached as Erastians. They thought that the Episcopalian Church, endowed and supported by the State, ought

to be subject to the laws of the land; that Convocation was not at liberty to do just what it pleased; that a royal licence was necessary for its particular proceedings; that the Lower House could not be independent of the Upper; and that clergymen of the Establishment could not be left to pursue the same freedom of ecclesiastical action as is exercised by those who belong to non-established Churches. With these views were combined theological opinions —by Low Churchmen themselves regarded as "Liberal," "Rational," "Moderate";—by their opponents, as "Latitudinarian" in the worst sense—as unpatriotic, unchurch-like, and as tending to scepticism, if not downright infidelity. Opposed, from their ecclesiastical position, to the principles of Nonconformists in general, and to the distinctive tenets of various Nonconformist communities in particular, Low Churchmen nevertheless sympathized with them as Protestants, and as those who were opposed to methods of government adopted by the later Stuarts.

The High Church party since the Revolution had been depressed. It may be ranged under two divisions: the Nonjurors, and those who reluctantly took the oath of allegiance to William. Politically they differed; in Church organization they really became distinct: the former had their own bishops, the latter submitted, professedly at least, to the prelates of the Establishment, but between the two divisions there existed a strong sympathy of senti-

ment. They asserted that the Church ought to be independent of State control; that dependence on State support did not at all affect the liberties of the clergy; that they were as free to take their own course as the ministers of unendowed communions; that Erastianism was abhorrent to spiritual minds, and was utterly inconsistent with the conduct of apostles, martyrs, and the noblest men in Christendom; that Convocation was no State contrivance, but the legitimate successor of the First Council of Jerusalem; that it needed no parliamentary sanction to give it authority, and that the Lower House, as well as the Upper, had independent rights. With all this was blended orthodoxy of the Anglo-Catholic type—a theological system based upon the Scriptures and the Fathers, upholding the three great Creeds, and giving prominence to the distinctive doctrines taught in the Book of Common Prayer, as interpreted by divines of the Thorndike school. And as they differed from the Low Church party in opinions, they did the same in feeling, which is more powerful than opinion. They were prejudiced against Nonconformists personally, almost as much as they were opposed to their principles. They termed them "schismatics" "enemies of the Church," "troublers in Israel." Their ultra-Protestantism High Churchmen disliked more than they did the Catholicism of Rome; and it annoyed and vexed them beyond measure, to behold sects, unsupported by the State,

left to adopt and carry out their own plans, whilst they themselves could not have the like liberty, enjoying as they did Church preferments.

It cannot be said that the two parties changed places on the accession of Queen Anne. "Low Church" retained bishoprics and benefices as before, "High Church" could not at once be lifted to chief seats in the national synagogue; but a spirit of the latter kind experienced signal encouragement and a marked revival after the decease of William; at the same time tendencies of the former description sustained a decided check, and underwent, in many quarters, a gradual decline. Dissenters were soon made to feel the change which had occurred.

The Act of Toleration, so called, embodied a principle embraced by the more advanced spirits of the age in this country; but it was far from commanding universal sympathy. A large number remained who looked upon it with thorough dislike, and a larger still regarded it with strong suspicion. It certainly found no favour in the eyes of Nonjurors, and High Churchmen; and some who had been, not very cordially, on its side from their connection with the Whigs, now on political grounds became tired of the connection; therefore they were ready to snap the only tie which bound them to ecclesiastical liberalism. Hence there were not wanting elements to produce a reactionary policy in the treatment of Dissenters. The first manifestation of the new un-

popularity of Dissent is indicated by Calamy, where he tells us :—

"They that bore Dissenters ill-will before, and were ready to reflect on them on all occasions, now openly triumphed, and though their hands were tied before, seemed now to conclude they should have free liberty to deal with them as they pleased, and talked of nothing less than of suppressing them. This was common in the city; and in several parts of the country they talked of pulling down the meeting houses as places not fit to be suffered. And in one town, Newcastle-under-Lyne, they actually went to work as soon as ever tidings of the king's death reached them. Several sermons were preached, and pamphlets dispersed to blacken them as much as possible. And such a violent temper discovered itself on a sudden, and such an inclination of heat and fury, as plainly showed the parties affected to have been kept under an unnatural restraint before."[1]

That the pulpit and the press commenced a crusade against the liberties secured by the Revolution is proved by a sermon of Sacheverell's, entitled "The Political Union, showing the Dependance of Government on Religion in general"; and by a pamphlet of Leslie's, entitled "The New Association of those called Moderate Churchmen, with the Modern Whigs and Fanaticks, to undermine and blow up the present Church and Government." The titles speak for themselves, and distinctly reveal the nature of the productions to which they are prefixed. The first

[1] "Abridgment," p. 620.

asserted the supremacy of the Church, and the obligation of the State to support its authority, and bow to its behests; the second railed against all moderation and liberality in politics, both publications betraying the same spirit of opposition to the fundamental principles of the Revolution. Such sentiments found a wild response in the conduct of multitudes; and both in London and the country corresponding popular demonstrations were witnessed. England—indeed human nature—loves to declare opinions and feelings in acts as well as words, in quaint symbols as well as spoken and printed speech. Maypoles had long been dear to English citizens and rustics, as significant emblems of loyalty, and attachment to the Church; Puritan dislike to the cause which encircled them had rendered the innocent masts with their wreaths and ribbons instruments of defiance against all kinds of Dissent. On this account they became, after the accession of Anne, most popular manifestoes with the lower classes, who industriously erected them in the city square, and on the village green; and danced round them in frantic merriment, singing songs, drinking healths, and ringing out loud huzzas in honour of Church and Queen. But there were other signs of the same thing much more important.

The new parliament summoned by Anne, and which met on the 20th of October, contained a large Tory majority, and in reply to her speech they said,—

"After your Majesty's repeated assurances, we neither doubt of the full enjoyment of all our rights and liberties, nor of your Majesty's defending and maintaining the Church as by law established; your Majesty has been always a most illustrious ornament to this Church, and has been exposed to great hazards for it; and therefore we promise ourselves, that, in your Majesty's reign, we shall see it perfectly restored to its due rights and privileges, and secured in the same to posterity, which is only to be done by divesting those men of the power who have shewn they want not the will to destroy it."

This was striking the note of a retrograde revolution; one that should undo what parliament in the previous reign had done; and it also pointed to the degradation of all Liberal statesmen, and the discouragement of all Liberal bishops. It is an instance of party feeling carried afterwards to so extravagant a pitch that it defeated its own purpose, and only reflected discredit upon its authors. Next, a complaint was made by Sir John Pakington, on the 18th of November, against the staunch Whig Bishop of Worcester, Dr. Lloyd, for having interfered in the election for the county. The bishop had actively opposed Pakington's return, and had written some violent letters on the occasion. The complaint was established to the satisfaction of the House, and not without good reason; for, judging from the bishop's correspondence adduced on the occasion, he had clearly committed himself, and acted inconsistently with his position both as a peer and a pre-

late. By a strong resolution, the House besought the Crown to remove him from the office of Almoner, which he held; and this was done, without hearing what might be said on the other side of the question. The Lords, seeing the injustice of proceeding against one of their number without giving him an opportunity of defence, came to the rescue, but in vain. The queen listened to the Commons, and complied with their request. It was quite a party affair, and the member of the Lower House who brought the charge against Lloyd, betrayed not only a personal animus against one who opposed his election, but also exhibited a dislike to all the spiritual peers on the Liberal side, as appears from his reported speeches.[1]

A more unequivocal proof of the state of feeling amongst the Commons remains to be noticed. A Bill was brought in, which is justly described by a candid historian as "a bold attempt to repeal the Toleration Act, and to bring back the pains and penalties of the times before the Revolution."[2] The Occasional Conformity Bill made its appearance within about three weeks after parliament had assembled. The Test Act, passed in 1673, required that all persons who undertook public employment, military or civil, should qualify themselves, not only by taking the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, but by receiving the sacrament according to the rites of the Church

[1] "Parliamentary Hist.," under date. [2] Perry's Hist., iii. 145.

of England.[1] A useless attempt had been made at the Revolution to free Dissenters from the operation of this Act, originally intended as a check upon Roman Catholics; and it remained in force throughout the reign of William. To make the holy institution a key of office, or, as it has been called, "a picklock to a place," is now felt by all religious people to be revolting; and, on that and other grounds, it was objected to then by many Churchmen, and by almost all Nonconformists. Some, however, who had no scruple about communicating on other occasions with Episcopalians in the celebration of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, were induced to conform on the occasion of their being elected to the office of mayor.

A distinction is to be made between joining with the Church in this solemn act as a token of common Christian brotherhood, and joining with it after this manner for the sake of holding a civil office. The one may be vindicated and recommended on grounds of reason and charity; the other must be condemned as a profane abuse or a time-serving expedient. A controversy on the subject arose between Daniel De Foe and John Howe, the former pouring out his indignation at the practice as an introduction to office, the latter vindicating it when observed as a token of Christian catholicity.[2] Though professedly debating

[1] "Church of the Restoration," vol. i. p. 425.

[2] See "Church of the Revolution," p. 431.

the same point, the two men looked, as controversialists often do, at different sides of the shield; and now it was, that High Churchmen sought to put an end to the whole controversy, by putting an end to occasional communion altogether.

The plan of the new Bill has been attributed to two clergymen residing in the city of Coventry, Dr. Armistead and Mr. Kimberley; one, or other, or both, being reported to have written a pamphlet, entitled "A Letter from a Friend in the Country, to a Member of Parliament," which publication exhibits the principle and scope of the measure, and presents several reasons why it should be passed. Whatever its origin, an order was passed for bringing it in; and on the 14th of November it was introduced by Mr. Bromley, Mr. St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke, and Mr. Annesley, afterwards Earl of Anglesey. It was immediately read for the first time; was committed on the 17th, and read a third time on the 28th; so rapidly did the stages succeed one another.[1]

The Bill provided that those who were obliged to receive the sacrament at church as a qualification —if, during their continuance in office, they were present at any conventicle where more than five people assembled—should forfeit one hundred pounds, and five pounds for every day they afterwards continued in office, and should be disabled from holding

[1] Journals, under date. Macpherson's "History," vol. ii. p. 249.

it afterwards; upon a second offence of the kind they were to pay a double penalty.[1]

Upon the second reading, when it was proposed that the committee be empowered to adopt a clause, exempting Dissenters from obligation to accept any appointment which required conformity, the proposal was rejected; a circumstance forming the most unrighteous part of the whole business, as it entailed liability to pay a fine for not serving an office to which an elected Dissenter might have a conscientious objection. If we may rely on Burnet, the argument for the Bill was,—that attending church on a single occasion for the sake of office, and going afterwards to a meeting house, was an evasion of the law, a profanation of the sacrament, and a notorious scandal, rousing alike the indignation of strict Dissenters and of habitual Conformists. The argument against the Bill was, that toleration had quieted the kingdom; that Dissent had by it lost more strength than it had gained; that the nation being engaged in war abroad, it was impolitic to raise animosities at home; that to encourage informers was a pernicious practice; that the fines imposed were excessive; and that, under this Act, respectable men would suffer from unprincipled enemies. The Bill having left the House of Commons appeared in the House of Lords; and all who pleaded for the Bill, we are told, professed not to

[1] The Bill is printed in the Parl. Hist., vol. vi. p. 62.

oppose the Toleration Act, though, as Burnet adds, "the sharpness with which they treated Dissenters in all their speeches, showed as if they designed their extirpation."[1]

The Bill was read in the Upper House a first time on the 2nd of December, and a second time the next day. The day after that, the elders of the French and Dutch Protestant Churches prayed to be freed from the operation of the projected law, after which amendments were suggested by certain peers. The reasonings were substantially the same as in the Lower House; but it was added on the side of opponents, that the Bill tended to model borough corporations according to a Tory type, and so advance Tory interests; and that to embroil society in this way, would discourage our allies and weaken our power in carrying on a war against the kingdom of France. The Bill met with opposition, on different grounds, from several temporal and spiritual peers; also by a manœuvring method the pecuniary fines were altered, with the idea that this would provoke the displeasure of the Commons, jealous as they were of interference with money matters on the part of the Lords.[2]

The Amendments led to a long conference with the Commons; and on the 16th of January, 1703, we find the Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Peter-

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[1] "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 336. [2] Parl. Hist., vol. vi. pp. 62–92.

borough, the Bishop of Salisbury, Lord Somerset, and Lord Halifax, as managers for the Lords, in conflict with Mr. Bromley, Mr. St. John, Mr. Finch, the Solicitor General, and Sir Thomas Powis, as managers for the Commons. These gentlemen, in the clerical, and lay costume of the day, with wig and cassock, or wig and coat, and all in high-heeled shoes bedecked with glittering buckles, become visible to us, through the mists of years, on that winter day; and we find them grievously troubled at the crowd of members who filled the Painted Chamber before their arrival. The Commons complained to the Lords that they could not get near the table. The House ordered the Lord Keeper to acquaint the Lord High Chamberlain that the room must be cleared, so that the managers from the Lower House might come to the bar. Evidently the two branches of the Legislature were not in harmony. The machinery had got out of gear. Each threw the blame of confusion on the other. The Commons complained of the crowd; the Lords told them they would do their best to make room, but said, "unless the House of Commons will send for their own members out of that place, it will be very difficult to effect it." When the chamber was cleared, and the two parties stood face to face, with the Bill before them, and a long list of amendments on the table, the contention became sharp and noisy enough; and we can imagine the Bishop of Salisbury, riding on the

wings of the storm, and meeting, amidst lightning and thunder, an equally excited opponent in the future Viscount Bolingbroke. No agreement could be reached. The Lords adhered to their amendments, the Commons adhered to their opposition, and so the measure came to nothing.[1]

Machinery worked behind the scenes. Whilst speeches were made on the floor of St. Stephen's and in the old House of Lords, and a hand to hand struggle proceeded in the Painted Chamber, the Cabinet was busy, the Court was busy, the Queen was busy. Marlborough and Godolphin pulled what strings they could lay their hands upon; Prince George, though a Lutheran, receiving the sacrament in the Established Church, as Lord High Admiral, and betraying his real sentiments in whispered words to a peer on the other side,—"My heart is wid you,"[2]—even he, under pressure, was compelled to support the intolerant enterprise. The queen above all others, wished to see the measure passed, and used influence with her husband and her friends for this purpose; often talking the matter over, no doubt, as she sat with Sarah of Marlborough at the tea-table, in the oriel-windowed room of Windsor castle, or in some snug corner of St. James' palace.

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[1] See the "Journals of Lords and Commons," and "Parliamentary History," under date.

[2] The story is told in connection with this occasion, but I rather think it belongs to a later date.

From the Houses of Parliament we pass to the Houses of Convocation. Some of the clergy claimed to sit after the death of William, but the lawyers decided against them; nor would Parliament pass an Act for the continuance of their session; such an Act, in the opinion of the Attorney General, being a violation of the royal supremacy.

When the new Parliament assembled in the ancient palace of Westminster, the Upper and Lower clergy gathered together in the still more ancient Abbey. The usual formalities took place; and Dr. Aldrich, Dean of Christ Church, was elected prolocutor. Attired in his Doctor's gown of scarlet, he had scarcely begun to occupy the presidential chair, within the enclosure of Henry the Seventh's Chapel, when a contest commenced respecting the proposed address to the Throne. The Lower House wished to use language which reflected on the reign just closed, but such a course the Upper House resolutely opposed. At last they came to an agreement; and the queen, in real wisdom, though in seeming satire, replied, "that their *concurrence* in this dutiful address was a good presage of their union in other matters, which was desirable for her service and the good of the Church." [1]

The old bone of contention as to the right of prorogation soon appeared; and the clergy requested the bishops to reconsider matters in dispute—a re-

[1] Lathbury's "Convocation," pp. 377–8.

quest which the latter acknowledged on the 13th of November, saying that they were anxious to restore peace, and that the contested right, which they asserted to be theirs, should be ever exercised so as to promote union between the two bodies. A committee of prelates was appointed to meet a committee of the Lower House, when the latter proposed that their brethren should be allowed to prepare matters of business before Convocation met. But no concessions were of any avail, short of altogether relinquishing the right of prorogation claimed by the archbishop; and those who demanded this surrender, proposed to address the queen, and beseech her to appoint competent persons for the adjudication of the controversy. It was rejoined, that the spectacle of a Church at variance with itself, seeking the help of a privy council, would give no small triumph to the enemies of the Establishment.

As the clergy had so long disputed with their diocesans, many said they acted as if they were Presbyterians, and set at nought Episcopal orders. This plausible if not well-founded accusation put them on their mettle, and at once they declared that they acknowledged *the order of bishops as superior to presbyters, to be of Divine Apostolical institution*, and they desired the bishops to join with them in defining the true doctrine of Episcopacy. A cunning contrivance was this to fix their superiors between the horns of a dilemma. They sought to make them

concur in High Church views of the episcopate, which would involve a renunciation of some bishops' well-known opinions; or, by provoking a refusal, to make them appear unfaithful to the Church, and favourers of Presbyterian equality. If there appeared on one side the wisdom of the serpent, it found not on the other the simplicity of the dove. Parties were pretty equally matched, as to sagacity, acuteness, and a regard for what they deemed their own interests. In the end resistance overcame attack; and if the one side rose like a surging billow, the other stood like a steady rock. After consideration, Tenison, Burnet, and the rest, simply answered,—that as the Church had not declared the superiority of bishops to be a Divine institution, they doubted whether they could legally assert it in Convocation without a royal licence; whereupon the Lower House, not to be beaten in this chess-like game, retaliated, by saying, that they were now blamed for asserting too much on behalf of Episcopacy, after having been blamed for allowing too little; therefore they wished the bishops to support sound Episcopal doctrine, by declaring against all Erastian and Arian theories. Here came another palpable thrust at Latitudinarians and Whigs. They might have returned a blow to the effect, that the advocates of Episcopalian government in theory were rebellious against Episcopalian government in fact.

Pertinacity on the side of prelates in maintaining a control over the proceedings of the other House,

came in conflict with equal pertinacity on the side of the latter, for the clergy proceeded to do what they had before suggested ; they petitioned Her Majesty to interfere in the dispute. They said, they had in vain requested their superiors to join in submitting the case for royal decision, they therefore now took the matter into their own hands, and prayed that she would exercise her royal authority for the settlement of the strife. Her privy council accordingly considered the question, and concluded that the existing form of prorogation, being in accordance with precedent, could not be altered but by a statute of the realm. The Crown itself gave no reply to the petitioners, leaving it to be supposed that as the queen and the court favoured their appeal, silence proved the non-existence of any legal ground on which High Churchmen could take their stand.

Parliament being prorogued on the 27th of February, 1703, and afterwards again and again until the 9th of November, convocational sittings were interrupted ; when the last date arrived, both the temporal and ecclesiastical powers resumed their activity. Scarcely had the House of Commons met than they returned to their former policy. A motion was made on the 25th of November to bring in a Bill against occasional conformity, but it did not meet with the same acceptance as before. Then there had been no division ; now, against 173 yeas there were 130 noes ; the Bill itself was somewhat altered, the old preamble

being omitted; the number constituting a conventicle being enlarged from five to twelve; and the penalty for attending it reduced from £100 to £50. We miss no lack of violence on the part of some of its supporters. Sir John Pakington, the Bishop of Worcester's enemy, unconstitutionally claimed the sympathy of the queen, and reviled everybody opposed to the Stuarts. He went so far as to use the following unparliamentary language:—

"I did wonder to hear so many bishops against the Bill, but that wonder ceased, when I considered whom they owed their preferment to. The Archbishop of Canterbury, I think, was promoted to that see by my Lord S——d's interest; and being asked what reason he had against the Bill, replied that he had not well considered the Bill, but that Lord S—— told him it ought not to pass. This was a very weighty reason for the head of our Church to give, and yet I daresay none of the rest could give a better. One would be provoked, by the late behaviour of the bishops, to move for leave to bring in a Bill for the toleration of Episcopacy; for since they are of the same principles with the Dissenters, it is but just, I think, that they should stand on the same foot."[1]

The second reading, before unanimous, was, on the 30th of November, opposed by 132 against 210; and the third reading, on the 7th of December, reckoned 140 opponents to 223 supporters.

A change in the temper of the House is visible.

[1] "Commons' Journals," and "Parl. History," under date.

The fact is, though the queen still secretly wished the High Church party to succeed, Marlborough and Godolphin saw the new attempt to be impolitic, and that deep offence had been given in many quarters by the proceeding of the previous years; also that Whig votes were needed for other Bills, and that it would not do to exasperate the Liberal leaders any further. A similar effect appeared in the House of Lords.[1] Burnet came out in full force against the resuscitated measure, and so did other peers, including the Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Peterborough, Lord Mohun, and Lord Wharton.[2] Of the bishops, London, Winchester, Rochester, Chester, and St. Asaph, were among the contents; Canterbury, Worcester, Salisbury, Ely, Lichfield, Norwich, Peterborough, Lincoln, Chichester, Oxford, and Bangor, were non-contents.[3] Godolphin voted for it, yet confessed the time chosen to be inopportune. Marlborough reluctantly gave his support, but Queen Anne, probably influenced by queen Sarah, allowed Prince George to absent himself on the occasion—an example followed by certain Tory Lords. On a final division the Bill was thrown out by 71 against 59, including proxies.

On the same cold winter days, Henry the Seventh's Chapel and the Jerusalem Chamber continued to be

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[1] Stanhope's "Queen Anne," vol. i. p. 123.
[2] "Parl. History," vol. vi. pp. 158–166. [3] "Lords' Journals."

opposing camps, the High Church banner waving over the one, the Low Church flag over the other. Paper after paper passed between them, in fact challenges to combat, with courteous, and sometimes, as they were regarded, uncourteous replies. During a recess between the 15th of December and the 4th of February, a committee, according to the overture of the bishops, spent a good deal of time, amidst the cheer of their Christmas and New Year's holiday, in drawing up a document which occupies a large place in the records of Convocation. Without waiving any independent rights, they commence with a statement that the House had employed several of its members to prepare such "heads of matter, as being debated and approved, might be offered to their lordships' grave and wise consideration." Numerous articles of complaint follow—as to the breach of divers canons and constitutions; the irreverent reading of the Prayer-Book; the neglect of public infant baptism; the inadequate provision for administering the Lord's Supper; the want of decency in worship; the irregularity of some ordinations; abuses connected with the marriage ceremony; the disuse of discipline; the commutation of penance; the permission of schools without canonical licence; the defective presentments of churchwardens; carelessness in keeping registers; and inaccuracy in printing the Bible.[1]

[1] Cardwell's "Synodalia," p. 707.

The archbishop informed his brethren of the Lower House, that the bishops should be furnished with copies of the paper; but afterwards said, that some of their complaints did not come within the limits of the canons; and Burnet, if he did not say so in the Jerusalem Chamber, wrote in the "History of his own Time," that the clergy, in their complaints of abuses, "took care to mention none of those greater ones, of which many among themselves were eminently guilty; such as pluralities, non-residence, the neglect of their cures, and the irregularities in the lives of the clergy, which were too visible."[1]

From all this it appears what "spirit in the air" brooded over Church and State, people and Parliament, Court and Convocation; and amidst the lowering storm there appear prominent ecclesiastical persons, who may be regarded as representing two currents of opinion and feeling, which set in with tremendous violence one against the other. Atterbury, Archdeacon of Totness, was the High Church Coryphæus. He was one of those turbulent men, with great ability and eloquence, who frighten their friends by the rashness of their policy. Low Church was his horror; and few of its opponents went far enough to please him. Even Dean Hooper, the Prolocutor, who had manfully fought the battles of his party in 1701, and had led on his coadjutors

[1] Vol. ii. p. 380.

to one attack after another upon the Upper House; who had figured conspicuously in the unseemly quarrels within the little organ room, at the door of the prelates' chamber; even he and his followers did not please their venerable brother. Writing on the 5th of February, 1704, relative to the paper of complaints just noticed, to Trelawny, Bishop of Exeter, now his great friend, he says :—

"We passed our grievances yesterday in the Lower House; we did not part with one of them. Some faint opposition was made to them by the creatures of our late leader, but they found it to no purpose. Archdeacon Drewe, at the beginning of the debate, in a very grave speech, proposed a previous question about stinting ourselves in the number of the grievances we were to carry up, and expressed a mighty concern lest we should so far exhaust ourselves as to have nothing to do next winter. But he was interrupted pretty roughly in the debate by 'No! No! No!' from all quarters, and so gave out."[1]

We can distinctly hear that "No! No! No!" echoing round the chapel from arch to arch, and we can distinctly see the excitement of deans, archdeacons, and proctors, whether clothed in red or black. This first letter to Trelawny, on the 5th of February, is followed by another in the course of the day, in which Atterbury vents on ———, the Whig

[1] Atterbury's "Correspondence," vol. iii. pp. 161, 168.

Bishop of St. Asaph, whose rapacious dealings he declares "must sink his character at last, and lessen the regard of all mankind for him. Since he was Bishop of St. Asaph he has had the greatest luck in the world, in making as much of the leaden mines as the former bishop had made in many years." Atterbury speaks of a fine of £800 waiting for him at Wells, on account of a lease which the late bishop had agreed to renew, but had not time to sign and seal. He then reckons up the whole profits of this Episcopal dignitary at not less than £3,600 a year, adding, "Much good may it do him, with the profit and scandal of them." A few days after he attends in the Jerusalem Chamber, where the Bishop of Worcester, Lloyd, an object of intense antipathy to High Churchmen, presides in the primate's room; and on receiving the address of the Upper House to the Lower, he pronounces it "the flattest, tediousest thing that ever passed Convocation." Writing again, Atterbury mentions a vote of thanks from the Lower House presented to the Speaker of the Commons, for espousing the interests of the clergy; and the Speaker's letter to the prolocutor in return, which was to be read and recorded in the Journals of Convocation. "It is to be an equivalent for our want of a public vote, which it was told the Speaker, and Sir Christopher Musgrave, in my hearing, that we did not desire or expect, and consequently we must not be surprised if we had it not, nor that the

Speaker read the order of thanks at five o'clock in a thin and weary House."[1]

The appearance of this distinguished champion, when at Totness—on the banks of the beautiful Dart—addressing his clergy in the parish church, is in keeping with his private correspondence. Convocation matters were uppermost in his mind. He dwelt upon his troubles, and vindicated his party :—

"'Thus much,' he exclaimed, referring to the honour and advantage of an English Synod, no doubt in emphatic tones, which added to the effect of his flowing style : 'Thus, much I must be allowed to say, that if it hath not as yet reached that end, and answered the expectations of good and wise men, in that particular, the fault was not in the inferior clergy, who took every step towards an accommodation that it was possible for them to take, without giving up the rights and very being of their House, rendering such assemblies and their acting altogether precarious.' In reference to the suppression of Synods, he exclaims, 'God be thanked, these are now dangers at a distance, while we have a gracious queen on the throne, who we are sure will be so far from doing any harm to the Church, that she will not in her time suffer any to be done to it.'"

In another speech to the same clergy, the archdeacon goes over the whole ground of dispute, contending for what he deemed the independent rights of the Lower House, and bursts out into a rhetorical and glowing defence of High Churchmanship.[2]

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[1] Atterbury's "Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 180.

[2] "Correspondence and Charges," vol. ii. pp. 216, 217.

Atterbury found in Dr. Wake an opponent less fiery, but as learned as himself without being less acute. There was between them not only controversy in Henry the Seventh's Chapel, but a "Battle of the Books," which were scattered all over London and the country, and supplied reading and topics of debate to scores and scores of city dignitaries and rural rectors. Literature was not so comprehensive and abundant as it is in our day; and then, more concentrated attention fixed itself on ecclesiastical controversies than now. Books on Convocation and cognate subjects, in rude leather bindings; and pamphlets, many without covers, were despatched from London into the country by slow travelling waggons, to be opened by High Church and Low Church clergymen at their cozy firesides in frosty nights between 1702 and 1704, with as much eagerness as their successors now tear off the covers of *The Standard* and *The Daily News*, when controversies are rife as to peace or war. Atterbury and Wake were then names well-known, their books were then books well read.

Atterbury had defended his views in an able work published in 1700. In that publication he had attacked Dr. Wake's answer to the "Letter of a Convocation Man" as a shallow and empty performance, deficient in historical learning and destructive of Church liberty.[1] Wake was well able to defend himself, and

[1] See "Church of the Revolution," p. 266.

he did so in a folio entitled "The State of the Church, 1703," contending, with a good array of authorities, that Convocation, though Atterbury asserted to the contrary, had no right to assemble without royal license; that originally bishops and clergy met together; and that no prolocutor was chosen before Chicheley's time, about the middle of the fifteenth century. The theory of Atterbury as to the premunientes clause in the bishop's writs he exposed and over-turned, but he ventured on severe censures of clerical irregularities, which, it is alleged, occasioned "the dislike even of very many very moderate men."

CHAPTER II.

1703-1709.

IN the month of November, 1703, England was visited by a terrific storm. It raged with pre-eminent violence on the western and southern coasts, tearing ships from their anchorage, sweeping away watch-towers and beacons, and strewing the shores of Devon, Cornwall, and Somersetshire with frightful wrecks. Dismantled merchantmen and shattered hulls drifted up the Severn, and some appeared even in the Thames. Fourteen or fifteen men-of-war were said to be lost amidst the rage of the elements; and fifteen hundred seamen are reported to have perished in the waves. The damage done in London was estimated at a million, that in Bristol at a hundred and fifty thousand pounds. The wind raced and raged amongst forests and villages, fields and cities, plucking up trees by the roots, unroofing the peasants' thatched cottages, and tearing off ornaments from manor houses and mansions. Bishop Kidder and his wife were crushed to death in their bed at the palace of Wells by the fall of a chimney. Church-steeples swayed from side to side as the hurricane swept round them. Leads on the nave and the choir

were rolled up as a scroll, and tiles were scattered like leaves.[1]

That storm looks scarcely an exaggerated type of a panic which struck "the religious world" about the same time. We caught the sighing and felt the shock of the rising winds just now, but the increase of the tempest will be seen and felt as we advance. The atmospheric disturbance spent itself in a few days; that to which I compare it lasted with more or less violence year after year. "The Church is in danger," has been a frequent cry caught up by the honest and fearful, also repeated in hoarse tones by the hypocritical and designing. Sincerity and fanaticism strongly blend at such seasons, and people lose their heads. Extravagant things said on one side provoke still more extravagant things on the other. Men and women lash themselves into fury. Real evils create imaginary ones. Every object is seen through a distorting medium. No allowance is made for common errors. Those who transgress most against candour and charity, are loudest in the condemnation of minor offences. To be cool and calm is to be indifferent and unscrupulous. To look on all sides is to betray the cause of truth. Half-hearted supporters are denounced as worse than enemies. Just in that way the excitement went on at the time of which I

[1] See Evelyn's "Sylvia," vol. ii. p. 350, for a description of this famous storm.

speak. The cry waxed louder and louder, "The Church is in danger." Members of Convocation echoed and re-echoed the cry. It was taken up by rectors, vicars, and curates, here, there, and everywhere. It inspired inflammatory speeches and inflammatory sermons and inflammatory conversations. In inns and market-places the contagion of fear on one side, of defiance on the other, circulated and spread. Tales were told of calves-head clubs—of wicked Dissenters who gave profane and treasonable toasts—as other tales were also told of wicked Churchmen, who toasted the horse which threw William, and the mole which occasioned the fall, as "the little gentleman dressed in velvet." Party sermons were preached on the 30th of January, some lamenting the great Rebellion and speaking contemptuously of the glorious Revolution; whilst others attacked the memory of Charles I. and his two sons.

The effect of all this was manifested in the House of Commons by the revival once more in December, 1704, of that inevitable Occasional Conformity Bill. Mr. William Bromley again rose as champion of the Church, to be supported and opposed in long-winded and warm debates. Brought in "with fiery haste"[1] it went its way through three readings. The third reading passed by 179 yeas against 131 noes; and as

[1] Stanhope's "Queen Anne," vol. i. p. 187.

a trick to secure success with the Lords, this Bill was proposed to be tacked to another, the Land Tax Bill, so that to resist the one would endanger the other; but on division "the tackers" suffered a defeat: there were 251 against the manœuvre, and only 134 in its favour. The queen was present in the Upper House during the debate on the second reading; but though still in sympathy, as she always was, with the High Church party, in reference to this measure her august presence did not overawe the House so as to prevent an increased majority in the third reading, of 71 against 50. Even Marlborough and Godolphin gave negative votes.

The storm whistled louder in Convocation than in Parliament. The Lower House, under Dr. Binks, who had been censured by the Commons in 1702, for an intemperate sermon on the 30th of January, again raised the old dispute, and the Upper House reminded their brethren, that if it was a reproach that they could not do business without a licence, it was not a less reproach that with a licence they had just after the Revolution declined business which was proposed to them by the king. With the old dispute was mixed up a reference to Toland's book,[1] respecting which the clergy complained that nothing had been done; whilst the bishops, pointing out the difficulty of the case, stated that they had recom-

[1] See "Church of the Revolution," pp. 275, 277.

mended the prosecution of the author by his own diocesan. Against their great enemy, the Bishop of Salisbury, they made a complaint, touching a recent ordination charge, in which he had taken occasion to reflect on their conduct: representing them as enemies to the bishops, to the Church, and to the country. When the Archbishop prorogued the Houses on the 13th of March, 1705, he told the lower clergy that their complaints required no answer, and defended his brother of Salisbury from their aspersions. He referred to their papers as of an undutiful character; told them they had been replied to in the bishops' observations registered in the Convocation Records; and that the proper place where they should be looked for was at Lambeth. We think we see the rock-like prelate, as he uttered these words in the Jerusalem Chamber; and also the scowls of defiance settling on the brows of some present, as they stepped into the Dean's Yard, and went home brooding over their wrongs. Outside, the storm became more boisterous. Dr. Drake, a violent party writer educated at Cambridge, published in 1704, in conjunction with Mr. Poley, M.P. for Ipswich, a pamphlet entitled "The Memorial of the Church of England." He attacked the queen's ministers for betraying its interests; and maintained, that, whilst ecclesiastical preferments made a goodly show, and royal patronage promised prosperity, the Church was sick with "hectic fever." Dissenters were increasing; and ministers

were getting up factions in their own favour, and discouraging the "most affectionate House of Commons the queen or the country ever had." The Church had lost seventeen heroic prelates, and their places were filled with men of another stamp, who under the "deceitful name of moderation" were damping all spiritual ardour. The memorial struck a note which vibrated throughout the land. Every possible attempt was made to create a suspicion that the bishops were betraying the Church, and that the court was handing it over into the hands of perfidious Dissenters.[1]

Of all publications however, at that moment, the most remarkable was one which aimed at a purpose different from what is suggested by the title-page. Daniel De Foe,—so well known, to us, by his inimitable "Robinson Crusoe," published many years afterwards, —at the time now referred to, was a clever satirical pamphleteer. Being an advanced Dissenter, writhing under the memory of wrongs inflicted on his predecessors, also stung by recent movements against Nonconformity, he had taken up his pen, in 1702, and dipped it in gall, to write one of the bitterest satires ever composed, namely, his "Shortest Way with the Dissenters." He said, that for fourteen years, the glory and peace of the most flourishing Establishment in the world had been eclipsed by

[1] Burnet's "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 425.

a set of men, who audaciously insulted what they ignorantly disliked. But their day was over; their power was gone. The nation's throne was filled with a true daughter of the Church; and now it was time to crush the viperous brood, so long nourished under her wings. Lenity had been fatal. It must not be continued an instant longer. True, the Dissenters were numerous; yet not so numerous as the Protestants of France, who had been rooted for ever out of their native land. The more numerous, the more dangerous were such people; therefore the more need for their suppression. The extirpation was not so difficult as some might timidly suppose. The opportunity had come for pulling up the weeds of sedition sown in England's goodly corn-field. As there is no cruelty in killing a snake, neither can there be in destroying those who corrupt posterity, and contaminate mankind. Some beasts are for sport, and the huntsmen give them advantage; but vermin are knocked on the head at once. "If," said the pamphleteer, "the Gallows instead of the Compter, and the gallies instead of fines, were the reward of going to conventicles, there would not be so many sufferers; people will go to church to be made mayors, they will go to forty churches rather than be hanged. If Dissenting congregations were banished, and Dissenting ministers tied to the gibbet, there would soon be an end of Dissent."

Many supposed all this was written in good ear-

nest. Some years ago Whately's "Historic Doubts" could be read by educated people as a genuine piece of scepticism; we need not wonder, then, that in a fiery age, when Church and Dissent roused furious passion, honest folks took this pamphlet as an exhortation to adopt towards Nonconformity a policy of utter extermination. Dissenters were indignant. High Churchmen shrank from such fierce recommendations, as going too far. Yet one man at least could be found actually to write and praise the author for a book of value next the Bible.[1] We might suppose such a person adopted the author's satirical vein; the author himself did not think so. At all events, the inflammatory pamphlet was read and circulated. Of course De Foe did not put his name to the strange effusion: in time, however, the secret leaked out; then the excitement rose to a higher pitch than ever. Those who took the thing in earnest were mortified beyond measure to find how cleverly they had been befooled. Churchmen were enraged to discover that so able a Church advocate turned out to be an execrable schismatic, and that what he had written proved a humiliating satire on their own absurd intolerance. While some Nonconformists chuckled at the exposure, others grieved that such a weapon had been employed on the side of truth and charity, and feared that opposition to their

[1] Wilson's "Life of De Foe," vol. ii. p. 56.

cause now would be hotter than it had ever been before. The discovery of the authorship increased the desire to read the publication; far and wide copies were scattered, as so many fire-brands, and the whole country appeared in a blaze. "Down with the Whigs!" "Down with the Presbyterians!" "Down with the Meeting Houses!" shouted thousands of Tory Churchmen. Press and pulpit, club and coffee house, now rung with maledictions on the impudent insulter of his fellow-countrymen. Government took up the matter. First, the publication was condemned in the House of Commons, and committed to the flames; next, the author was indicted at the Old Bailey, and sentenced to pay a fine of 200 marks, to stand in the pillory three times, to be imprisoned during the queen's pleasure, and to find sureties for good behaviour seven years. The trial and its issue soon produced a reaction. In July, 1703, before the old Royal Exchange, near the now vanished Conduit in Cheapside, and under the shadow of Temple Bar, just vanishing in our time, respectable persons acted as a body-guard round the literary convict; garlands were hung on the ugly machine, and the condemned man mounted it, as if it had been a throne, amidst sympathetic acclamations, whilst his health was drunk in overflowing bumpers.[1]

During the general strife of politics and religion

[1] Wilson's "Life and Times of De Foe," vol. ii. p. 65, *et seq.*

the queen performed an act, ever since honourably associated with her reign and name. Her birthday fell on a Sunday, February 6th, 1704, and the next day she sent a messenger to the House of Commons, informing them that she desired to grant, for the benefit of the Church, her entire revenues arising out of tenths and first-fruits, imposed by the Pope, and afterwards appropriated to the Crown. These, amounting to between £16,000 and £17,000 a year, were now to constitute a fund for the relief of the poorer clergy. Burnet takes credit to himself for having suggested such a plan first to William and Mary, and now to Anne.[1] However that might be, the Commons approved of the charitable design, and at her request brought in a Bill enabling the Crown to alienate this portion of the royal revenue, and to create a chartered corporation for the distribution of the bounty. The Statute of Mortmain was repealed, so far as was needful to give effect to the queen's generous design, which embraced the stimulating of others to an imitation of her own example, by bequeathing money for the augmentation of the fund. That part of the Bill which touched the Statute of Mortmain provoked discussion in the Upper House; but the bishops, unanimous in this matter, successfully carried it through all its stages.[2]

[1] "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 369.

[2] "Parliamentary History," vol. vi.; Tindal's "Continuation," vol. iii. p. 609; Boyer's "Queen Anne," p. 119.

Passing by this pleasant episode in a stormy period, we reach the summer of 1705, when England was astir from end to end, with a coming election, into which the ecclesiastical element was thrown with exasperating effect. De Foe's pamphlet, the "Memorial," other publications of a like order, and "the-Church-in-danger" cry, wrought an excitement rarely witnessed even in old-fashioned electioneering days. Patrick, Bishop of Ely, complained in the House that in the election for Cambridge, it "was shameful to see a hundred or more young students encouraged in hollowing like schoolboys and porters, and crying out 'No fanatics!' 'No occasional conformity!' against two worthy gentlemen that stood as candidates."[1] At Sandwich the Dissenters were extremely active, and a newspaper controversy arose as to whether a flag had or had not been hung out from an Anabaptist Meeting House, emblazoned with "the old Commonwealth breeches and a crown reversed." At Epworth, in Lincolnshire, the High Church incumbent, Samuel Wesley, stoutly opposed the Whig candidates. On the steps of the parish church, the mob abused him "as rascal and scoundrel," and went on a great part of the night "drumming, shouting, and firing of pistols," under the parsonage windows, where lay his good wife, Susanna, "who

[1] "Complete History of Europe for the Year 1705," p. 420. quoted in "Cooper's Annals of Cambridge," vol. iv . 73.

had been brought to bed not three weeks before."[1]

The result of the elections appeared in October, 1705, at the opening of Parliament. The Whigs had gained an ascendancy on many grounds; perhaps not scrupulous about employing means such as they often attributed to the Tories. The cry of "Church in danger" was now noticed, not that it might be repeated, but repressed. The Whig ministers put into the queen's hand a speech, in which she complained of malicious insinuations of the Church's peril, and declared her purpose to maintain both the Establishment and the principle of Toleration. The Tory Lord Rochester, however, in a debate on the Regency Bill, persisted in representing the Church as in peril, upon which the Whig Lord Halifax challenged him and his party to a debate on the question. Her Majesty, as on a former occasion, appeared as a listener; while Rochester tried to make good his words, and Halifax taunted him with deeds of other days, when his lordship was a member of the High Commission. Sharp, Archbishop of York, apprehended danger from the increase of Dissent, particularly from the multiplication of Dissenting academies, and he moved, that the Judges might be consulted as to whether there were sufficient laws for their suppression. Compton,

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[1] Tyerman's "Life and Times of Samuel Wesley," p. 297.

Bishop of London, rose to inveigh against a sermon by Benjamin Hoadly, soon to be a name of great renown; a sermon in which, according to the Right Reverend speaker, "rebellion was countenanced, and resistance to the higher powers encouraged." This brought Burnet on his feet, who defended Hoadly, and aimed an arrow at his brother Compton, who, said he, ought to have been the last to complain of such a sermon; for, if the doctrine of that sermon were not good, he did not know what defence his lordship could make for appearing in arms at Nottingham. The Bishops of Ely and Lichfield, Patrick and Hough, lamented the bitter spirit shown by the Universities towards Nonconformists, and the names which some clergymen gave their diocesans; Hooper, now on the bench, in his lawn and rochet, as Bishop of Bath and Wells, regretted the terms "High Church," and "Low Church;" since the party to which he belonged only desired the Church's welfare; and the other party he did not believe were averse to Episcopal order. It was voted, by 61 to 30, that the Church was "not in danger," a decision in which the Commons concurred, by a majority of 212 against 160. A royal proclamation followed, denouncing all who should propagate scandalous reports about the Establishment, and stigmatizing the much-talked-of "Memorial," by Dr. Drake, as "a malicious and seditious libel."[1]

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. vi. pp. 479-511, and Burnet's "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 434.

Whilst Parliament sat in its accustomed place during the autumn of 1705, Convocation held its meetings close by; and as bishops would talk to their brother peers on all-absorbing questions of the day, deans, archdeacons, and proctors would also discuss them with commoners whose friendship they enjoyed. But on few subjects did the two ecclesiastical bodies come to the same conclusion: and as to the kind of loyal address proper at the time they held divergent opinions. The bishops drew up an address in which they dwelt upon the Church's security; the inferior clergy would not concur in it, but proposed another, which while it acknowledged the devotion of the Queen, did not deny that peril was to be apprehended from other quarters. When this fresh document was carried up in due form by the Prolocutor to the Jerusalem Chamber the bishops said with all dignity, "We cannot accept your address, you must accept what we propose, or give reasons for rejecting it." At this announcement when reported in Henry the Seventh's Chapel, the assembled members took fire —"An English Synod," said they, "has the right of dissenting from what is proposed by the prelates, without giving any reason for such dissent." The Fathers of the Church were ready with reproof, as well as reply; their undeferential sons signified that they would agree to no address which did not emanate from themselves. This defiant policy went

much too far to please men of moderate views and calm temper. The Dean of Peterborough at once drew up a protest against the irregularities of his brethren, especially in asserting their independence by claiming the right of self-prorogation, and by putting into the chair a Prolocutor not sanctioned by the Primate. The protest received the signatures of 51 out of 145 members; but when the Dean endeavoured to read it he was put down by the clamours of the assembly, and at the next meeting the majority voted a complaint against the protestors, and a fresh declaration of Convocation rights. In February, 1706, when they met after the recess, they resolved on a letter to the bishops, reminding them of previous addresses which waited for their Lordships' reply. A wide gulf now yawned between the Houses. A stop was put to all friendly communication. The Lower House had held intermediate sessions—and entered on business, approving some books, condemning others.[1]

This conduct tired out their Lordships' patience; and the Queen, most likely at the Archbishop's suggestion, wrote to him a letter dated February 25, 1706, expressing her concern about these prolonged differences, her endeavour to maintain the Constitution of the Church, and her expectation that bishops

[1] This is Burnet's statement: "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 442.

and clergy would act conformably to this her resolution. At the same time she indicated her pleasure that Convocation should be prorogued. The Bishop of Norwich acting as His Grace's commissary, on the 1st of March, summoned before him the Lower House. Dr. Binks, as Prolocutor, accompanied by some of his brethren attended accordingly. The presiding bishop began to read the royal letter; Atterbury, the Prolocutor's prime minister, plucked his sleeve, suggesting, "This is no place for us." The Prolocutor, ready to retire, stood irresolute. Up rose Burnet, "springing from his seat," and shouted with characteristic impetuosity, "This is the greatest piece of insolence I have ever seen, to refuse to hear the queen's orders. Mr. Prolocutor, go at your peril." The reading went on, the Prolocutor remained a few minutes; but soon the members, foreseeing the inevitable prorogation, rushed to the door determined not to listen; thus repeating one of those tumultuous scenes which had disgraced the lower clergy in the days of King William. When the spring came, there appeared with it another royal letter to His Grace of Canterbury, complaining of illegal practices being continued, and of reflections cast upon the late prorogation, as unprecedented. This Her Majesty regarded as a plain invasion of her supremacy, and as she was resolved to preserve the Constitution of the Church of England, she would "use such means for the punishing offences of this

nature as are warranted by law."[1] Upon this letter being sent, a fresh disturbance arose. The Archbishop, on the 10th of April, summoned the Lower House to the Episcopal Chamber. Some members went, but not the Prolocutor. He was in the country —they said. This was an intolerable mark of disrespect. Rock-like Tenison would not put up with it; and pronounced the absent Dean guilty of *contumacy*, reserving the declaration of a penalty until the end of the month. Informed of this, the latter did not feel inclined to brave the consequences. Before the day arrived, a protestation was drawn up against the Archbishop's proceeding; and this was carried up by the Prolocutor. But here again the heart of the the Very Reverend President of the Lower House failed him—he begged pardon and submitted to the Primate's authority—whereupon sentence was waived, and the matter ended.[2] Things being brought to this pass, there followed a series of prorogations, and Convocation did not meet for business after April, 1706, until November, 1710.

A double question arose in these disputes; first, as to the relation in which the Church stands to the

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[1] Wilkins' "Concilia," vol. iv. p. 636.

[2] See Burnet's "Own Time," vol. ii. pp. 412, 441–3, 470, 525. Calamy's "Continuation," pp. 688, 713; Lathbury's "Convocation," pp. 397, 404; Perry's "History of the Church," vol. iii. pp. 186–196. There is a letter by Atterbury (vol. iii. p. 272), alluding to an incident not mentioned in these works.

State; and next, as to the relation in which the two ecclesiastical bodies stand to each other. The High Churchmen of the Lower House were strongly opposed to State control. Nominally they owned the royal supremacy, and cheerfully they accepted all the temporal advantages derived from a connection with the civil power—in other words, they rejoiced in an establishment; but they could not bear what is called Erastian control, and they claimed a freedom in ecclesiastical action, which of course belongs to any religious denomination unendowed and unpatronised. From the point of view occupied by what are called the Free Churches of the present day, this appears inconsistent; as State endowment involves State control, and a Church, in the position of the Church of England, with a certain ministerial prestige of rank, and certain sources of ministerial revenue,—with its chief pastors in Parliament, and its chief wealth derived from what is termed national property,—cannot have the same liberty in its proceedings as fairly pertain to those who enjoy no such advantages. Indeed, High Churchmen repudiate the free principles on which Presbyterian, Wesleyan, and Congregational bodies proceed; and therefore the practical consequences of those principles cannot reasonably be expected. The relation of the Lower and Upper Houses is matter of law, not any law in Scripture, but the law of the land. The dispute in Queen Anne's time was, as to what that law really

was. The Upper House read it in one way, the Lower House read it in another. Without entering into the question, Which view is constitutional?—without attempting now to decide between Atterbury and Binks on the one hand, and Tenison and Burnet on the other—leaving that knotty question to ecclesiastical lawyers, I would observe, that, looking simply at what the two Houses did in reference to one another, they seem to have been both of them more or less wrong. Whilst the point respecting prorogation continued in debate between them; whilst, legally considered, it remained unaltered and open; whilst no competent tribunal decided between them; the Lower House had no right to beg the question, and act as if its independence was acknowledged. Its independent proceedings, contrary to the judgment of the bishops the acknowledged spiritual rulers of the Church in theory, was a daring assumption to say the least. On the other hand some part of the conduct of the bishops, taking the Archbishop as their representative, cannot be vindicated. I am not thinking of temper, on the whole the prelates in this respect—Burnet excepted—appear to advantage. I am thinking of constitutional consistency. The Lower House is an integral part of Convocation—and Convocation is a constitutional body, recognized by the State as possessed of certain functions. It has not the right to legislate like Parliament, but it has a right to exist, to deliberate, to

advise. In other words, so long as the Establishment remains, Convocation may claim the privilege or power of meeting together. To prorogue it then again and again—entirely to suspend its operations without pronouncing its existence illegal, was surely a sort of revolutionary proceeding, a violation of the law and order of the Church of England. At the same time, it is to be remembered in all fairness to the parties concerned, that, on both sides, there were devout and conscientious men. They proceeded along what they believed to be paths of duty, and the differences between them did not affect their religious character; far differently however must they be estimated who in this prolonged strife were influenced by party spirit, by personal antipathies, and by the blind impulses summed up in the words, intolerance and bigotry.

The union of England and Scotland was effected in 1707. On May-day a general thanksgiving took place. A grand procession to St. Paul's was followed by a service, in which the Bishop of Oxford preached from Psalm cxxxiii. ver. 1. Addresses to her Majesty poured in from all parts of the country, and the Dissenting ministers of London expressed their gratitude to God, and their congratulations to the queen, on "the entire union of the two nations," the settled peace and quiet of her government, the Protestant succession to the throne, and other similar causes for rejoicing. The union

involved religious questions. Tories and Churchmen were alarmed. They apprehended danger from so close an alliance between one country under Episcopal, and another under Presbyterian rule. In the Commons, Sir John Packington, in the Lords, Bishop Hooper, spoke against the measure; but the cabinet, the liberal bishops, the majority of the lords, and the majority of the commons, were strongly in its favour. The address of the London Dissenting ministers may be regarded as fairly representing the sentiments of their brethren throughout the country; and it may be noticed here that the ultra Dissenter, Daniel De Foe, who had stood in the pillory, was now entrusted by the Whig Government with important business in the progress of this great transaction. It is curious to notice the want of religious sympathy at that time between the two countries. Separated by a wide, desolate, troubled border-land; by conflicting traditions and prejudices; with little individual intercourse, in days when a journey from London to Edinburgh seemed like crossing the globe, the two nations were also alienated, if that be not too strong a term, by ecclesiastical preferences and recollections; also by theological opinions as well as by sentimental impulses. There was first the controversy about bishops and presbyters, which had produced a mutual exasperation almost inconceivable; prelacy was an abomination on the other side the Tweed, and presbyterian-

ism a perfect scarecrow on this. Lawn sleeves Scotchmen could not endure, and Genevan cloaks an immense number of Englishmen looked upon with undisguised contempt. The memory of wrongs endured under the Stuarts lingered in the breast of many a Highlander, and many a Lowlander; and the change wrought in the Establishment of Scotland, the transference of property and prestige from priest to presbyter, was a historical recollection rankling in the mind of the London citizen and the country squire. The strong Calvinism too, preached in some Edinburgh and Glasgow pulpits, excited aversion in the bosoms of Arminian clergymen occupying pulpits in York, and Bristol, and Norwich. The whole type of religious feeling, expressed in the Book of Common Prayer, and the devotional literature based upon it, occupied another spiritual zone than that filled by the Assembly's Confession and Catechism, and the works to which those formularies had given birth.

Between the Scotch Presbyterian, however, and the English Dissenter, there existed considerable affinity. In dogmatic belief, in public worship, and in personal experience, numbers on both sides were much the same. Still a strong difference might be detected between certain English Presbyterians and Scotch Presbyterians. Dr. Edmund Calamy visited Scotland in 1709, and in his account of the journey some

curious instances of what we have said appear. He relates an amusing story of his conversation with a good woman in North Britain,—who, talking with him about faith and good works, to the latter of which the English divine attached just importance,—exclaimed, "'O sir, now you are fallen upon good works, as to them, I must own, that by the report I have heard, I am inclined to believe you have more of them with you than we have among us.' 'Well then,' said I, in order to a yet further trial, 'if the belief of what God has revealed, and the fruits and efforts of that belief, where it is sincere and hearty, are the same with us and you, how can it be that you should have the gospel with you, and not we also among us?' 'Ah, sir,' said she, 'you have with you no kirk sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, and therefore have not the gospel.' 'And is that then,' said I, 'the gospel? I am sure it is a poor, meagre, and despicable gospel, if you rest there, and carry the matter no further.'"[1]

There were not wanting, at the moment, plenty of men and women in England much more learned than that good lady, who attached much the same importance to Episcopacy and Convocation, as she did to her presbyterian form of Church government. And, it is remarkable, that Scotch Episcopalians were out of sympathy with their co-religionists in the South, inso-

[1] Calamy's "Life," vol. ii. p. 170.

much that out of the eleven Episcopalian clergymen in Edinburgh, only one prayed for Queen Anne. With regard to that exceptional person—Calamy says, "I asked if he could mention any other Episcopal meeting, but his own, where the queen was prayed for? He acknowledged he could not."[1] The excellent William Carstairs, who had been chaplain to King William, was Calamy's great friend, and invited him to the Metropolis of the North, and between the two there existed a strong religious sympathy and friendship.

After the union of the two countries had been effected, some Scotchmen regretted it, and in a fit of party spleen, the Earl of Findlater proposed to the Peers, in 1713, that it should be repealed; to which Lord Peterborough replied; "That though sometimes there happened a difference between man and wife, yet it did not happily break the marriage: so in the like manner, though England, who in this national marriage must be supposed to be the husband, might, in some instances, have been unkind to the lady, yet she ought not presently to sue for a divorce, the rather because she had very much mended her fortune by this match."[2] Thank God, those days are gone; neither husband nor wife now wishes for a separation. In spite of old heartburnings, the union told well for both countries in a spiritual no less than a temporal

[1] Calamy, "Life," ii. 164. [2] Stanhope's "Hist. of Europe," i. 38.

respect: but never did the marriage of the two nations prosper under Queen Anne, as it does under Queen Victoria.

Prince George of Denmark, husband to the Queen, died at Kensington Palace, on the 28th of October, 1708. He is described by an historian of the next generation,[1] as a prince of an amiable rather than a shining character, brave, good-natured, modest, and humane, but devoid of great talents and ambition. His royal wife was assiduous in her affectionate attentions during his last moments;[2] and as she watched by his dying bed, received support from the renewed friendship of the Duchess of Marlborough, then in waiting as Mistress of the Robes. Intrigues were going on at the time, relative to ministerial appointments. Whigs formed the cabinet, and the lady counsellor, amidst fluctuations of favour, now enjoyed her mistress's confidence, being addressed in her notes as "dear Mrs. Freeman." "But the reconciliation did not endure."

Anne wrote to the Czar,[3] saying. "It has pleased God to take to Himself the soul of our dearest;" and whilst she was at St. James', thinking of him who lay a corpse at Kensington, heralds were arranging the order of the funeral, and a warrant was sent "to prepare the royal vault for the interment of George Prince

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[1] Smollett. [2] Burnet's "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 515.
[3] Stanhope's "Queen Anne," vol. ii. p. 96.

of Denmark;" the Dean and Chapter afterwards put in their claim with that of the heralds to the pall at the royal funeral.[1] Addresses of condolence were presented by religious as well as civic bodies, and among the rest, the Dissenting ministers, headed by Mr. Matthew Clark, waited on Her Majesty and were introduced by the Earl of Sunderland. On this occasion she was not silent, as she had been before, but graciously replied, "I thank you for your address and the assurances you give me of your zeal for my person and government, the union, and the Protestant succession." Funeral sermons were preached, in which the virtues of the deceased prince were commemorated, his conjugal fidelity being extolled in terms, from which "it may be inferred that the age presented many specimens of an opposite kind."[2] Calamy attributes to the prince the exercise of a favourable influence on the queen's mind, and refers to his decease as a general loss, being "attended with such an entire change of measures, and so many unhappy consequences." On the other hand, Burnet speaks of "great errors," and "great misfortunes," imputed to

[1] "Report of the Royal Commission on Hist. MSS.," vol. ii. p. 218; vol. iv. p. 181.

[2] MS. note to Sermon preached at St. Giles in the Fields, by Thomas Knaggs, M.A., Chaplain to Lord Brook. I have before me two other Funeral Sermons, one by Dr. Nicholls, preached at St. James', Clerkenwell; another by W. Harris, preached near Aldgate. This must have been Dr. W. Harris, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Jewry Lane.

the prince's easiness and to his favourite's ill-management and bad designs. This drew a heavy load on the prince and made his death to be less lamented."[1]

Prince George, as a foreign Protestant, may be regarded as representing a large religious class, then living within our shores—Lutherans, Dutch Reformed, and French Calvinists—who were all allowed liberty of worship. Amongst the French refugees, Camisard fanaticism, which arose in the Cevennes—a violent reaction against violent injustice—appeared in England; and in some of its manifestations, took the form of pretended supernatural utterances. The ministers and elders of the French Church in the Savoy summoned before their consistory three of the "prophets;" and the civil power also dealt with these infatuated offenders. Three of them were convicted, under the statute against blasphemy, and had to stand on a scaffold at Charing Cross and the Royal Exchange with a paper in their hats stating the nature of their offence. Calamy fell in with certain individuals of the party, and relates strange stories of their character and proceedings;[2] but these visionaries were no fair specimens of French Protestantism. For the most part, the French exiles were steady, sedate, and religiously disposed; preserving the

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[1] Life of Calamy, vol. ii. p. 215; Burnet's "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 515.

[2] "Life," vol. ii. pp. 72, 94, *et seq.*

traditions of their fathers, and suffering by submission to banishment, a terrible penalty, for conscientious convictions. A kindly feeling towards the strangers led to repeated attempts at securing for them here a permanent home; and in 1709 an Act passed for naturalizing foreign Protestants, upon their taking oaths of allegiance and receiving the sacrament in a Protestant church. The Bill, carried in the House of Commons by a large majority, was, when introduced in the Upper House, zealously supported by the Bishop of Salisbury. The Bishop of Chester indeed spoke against it, but the measure met with little opposition.[1] A Bill in 1711 to repeal this humane and equitable Act, though carried by the Commons, was wisely rejected by the Lords.

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[1] "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 524.

CHAPTER III.

1709–1714.

HENRY SACHEVERELL, grandson of a Presbyterian minister, and son of a Low Church incumbent, a High Church zealot of no common order, now comes upon the stage. He acquired in London a doubtful popularity by advocating passive obedience and non-resistance, and by vilifying Dissenters in the most extravagant style. Preaching before the Judges at the Summer Assizes, 1709, in the county of Derby, and on the significant 5th of November, before the London Corporation assembled in St. Paul's, he denounced the Revolution as an unlawful act; and bitterly inveighed against the toleration of "the Genevan discipline," as fraught with great peril and adversity to the Church of England. The Tory Lord Mayor, delighted with the sermon, requested its publication; but his motion to that effect met with opposition from a brother Alderman. However, this and the Derbyshire discourse soon appeared in print, much to the joy of the "High Flyers" as they were termed; much to the disgust of sober-minded people. The

audacity of the publication made it popular, and 40,000 copies were soon sold.

Both on political and religious grounds, it roused the indignation of the Whigs, and of the Cabinet which represented their ascendency. "Shall Sacheverell be prosecuted?" became a Cabinet question; and with it another question was raised: "Shall he be impeached?" Unfortunately, Sunderland and Godolphin urged the latter course, and prevailed. By a vote of the Commons, the preacher was summoned to the bar for malicious, scandalous, and seditious libels. Thus a worthless adventurer became, in the eyes of sympathizing adherents, exalted to the honour of martyrdom. Articles of impeachment were drawn up, Sacheverell was ordered into custody; and, to demonstrate still further its feeling on the subject, the House thanked the Rev. Benjamin Hoadley for good service done by him in a sermon vindicating the principles of the late happy Revolution, and recommended that the Queen should confer upon him some ecclesiastical dignity.

Perhaps there never was, in our country, excitable as it is, a scene more extravagant than that which took place in Westminster Hall during the three long weeks spent over this wretched business.[1] Clerks, ushers, Masters in Chancery, judges, peers,—all in full

[1] "The Tryal of Dr. Henry Sacheverell," published by order of the Peers, 1710, p. 1.

robes,—marched two and two in solemn procession, with a herald in his tabard and a serjeant-at-arms carrying his mace. The Lord Chancellor presided. Eighteen of the Commons were a Committee of Management. There followed a grand display of forensic eloquence. General Stanhope forcibly insisted on the occasional necessity of resisting unrighteous government; and Sir Simon Harcourt, with other advocates for the accused, dared not go beyond the assertion that obedience ought to be the rule, and resistance only the exception—a principle indeed admitted on the other side. They contended that in the obnoxious sermons, only broad and general truths had been laid down, not at all inconsistent with a full appreciation of the deliverance wrought by William III. The rich, the titled, the fashionable, crowded to hear the pleadings; and the doors of the judgment hall from day to day were thronged by excited mobs. It was plain enough that the Ministry had made a mistake. By this proceeding they had roused the fanaticism of former years. The old fever burst out afresh. The "Church-in-danger" cry once more burst out, and rang from lip to lip in ranks composed of those who honestly believed in that watchword, and of many more who were mere partisans, or did not care one straw about the matter, only they liked to share in an uproar. People kissed the delinquent's hand, and shouted, "Sacheverell and the Church for ever!" as one of the lumbering coaches of the day, accompanied

by an enthusiastic procession, rolled along the Strand from the Temple, where their champion lodged. When the Queen, who at least secretly sympathized with him, went *incognita* in her sedan to witness the proceedings, mobs gathered round, exclaming, "God bless your Majesty and the Church! We hope your Majesty is for Dr. Sacheverell." At last the prisoner at the bar read his defence (the composition of which is ascribed to Atterbury), asserting his loyalty, explaining his meaning so as to modify it—referring to the Revolution with respect, and closing with some touches of feeling, adapted to move the hearts of his judges.[1] The tone and style of this speech are very different from those of the sermons. When the question came to the vote, 69 pronounced him Guilty, 52, Not guilty. And what was the result? "All this bustle," Godolphin, full of disappointment, wrote to Marlborough, "ends in no more but a suspension of three years from the pulpit, and burning his sermon at the Old Exchange." This was all the punishment; but the effect in injuring the Government was tremendous. "The fable of the bear that hurled a heavy stone at the head of its sleeping master on purpose to crush a fly upon his cheek, is a type of the service which on this occasion, Godolphin rendered to his party."[2]

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[1] "Tryal," pp. 333–350.

[2] Stanhope's "Queen Anne," vol. ii. p. 143.

Not imprisoned—free to go where he liked, only forbidden to preach—Sacheverell visited churches, read prayers,—that he could do,—and soon set out on a progress through the country, enjoying an ovation and hailed by crowds wearing oak-leaves in their hats, the favourite Stuart badge. He was requested to christen children,—that also he could do,—with his own precious name. At Banbury and Warwick, the corporation in robes met the popular divine; and in Shrewsbury, the streets, with their quaint old timber architecture, were lined with 5000 people to give him welcome. A lady at Lichfield used—in reference, no doubt, to a later visit to that city—to say that her grandfather saw Samuel Johnson, a little boy, perched on his father's shoulders, "listening and gaping at the much celebrated preacher." When the father was asked, how he could bring such an infant to church, in the midst of such a crowd, he answered, it was impossible to keep him at home, for, young as he was, he believed the child had caught the public spirit and zeal for Sacheverell, "and would have stayed for ever in the church, satisfied with beholding him."[1]

A letter written by the Bishop of Worcester to the Archbishop of Dublin, 1710, June 30, opens a window through which we may see what went on.

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[1] Boswell's "Johnson," Croker's edition, vol. i. p. 33. Croker objects that Johnson in 1710 was only three months old; but that is an objection to the date, not the substance of the story.

"You cannot but be sensible of the great danger we are brought into by the turbulent preaching and practices of an impudent man, one Dr. Sacheverell, that having been judged guilty of high crimes and misdemeanours by the Parliament of this kingdom, is now riding in triumph over the middle of England, and everywhere stirring up the people to address to her Majesty for a new Parliament. The danger is so great that I cannot but tremble to think of it, if her Majesty should dissolve her present Parliament and change her Ministry, which is the thing driven at by the addresses. But withal it is so visible that I hope that her Majesty cannot but see it through all the false colours they put on it." "This is like to be the overturning of all in our present circumstances, and it is surely so understood by all the Papists and nonjurors of this kingdom."[1]

The rejoicings of Sacheverell's friends were not all of a harmless character. The mob gutted the chapel of Mr. Burgess, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and then burnt him in effigy; and it is amusing to learn, that at Cirencester, people got up a match between two cocks, to whom they gave the names of the High Church and Nonconformist divines. Unfortunately, Cock Burgess killed Cock Sacheverell.

Sacheverell did what he could in his progress to secure the restoration of the Tories to power and the calling of a new Parliament. Whatever might be the extent of this demagogue's personal influence in the matter, the object was accomplished. The Whigs

[1] "Report of Hist. MSS. Commission," vol. ii. p. 245.

resigned. Tories came into office. The general election of 1710, which ensued at this crisis, turned much on an ecclesiastical question.

> "Join, Churchmen, join, no longer separate,
> Lest you repent it when it is too late.
> Low Church is no Church."

Thus ran one of the placards in the Middlesex contest: it is but a specimen of many more.

The Tories succeeded.

In 1711, the Whigs again aspired to office, on the ground of objections against a peace, which, after the English victories abroad, the Tories wished to establish. The Tories were charged with being the friends of the French, and, to enlist Protestant sympathies on the side of the aspirants, a pageant was planned in November against Rome and Romanism—ridiculing holy water, sandals, copes, beads, bald pates, and pregnant nuns. People dressed up an effigy of the Pope under a silver-fringed canopy, accompanied by the Pretender on the left, and the devil on the right. The exhibition was intended to take place on the 17th of November, the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's accession, a day very dear to English Protestants; but the Ministry, under the apprehension of a popular tumult, prevented the completion of the ridiculous pageant.

The Tory Lord Nottingham, whose name is identified with the Occasional Conformity Bill, at this junc-

ture, for certain personal reasons, effected an alliance with the Whigs; and a coalition between the two parties ensued on this compromise, that Nottingham should join the Whigs in opposing the peace, and that the Whigs should join Nottingham in his opposition to occasional nonconformity. First we see an onslaught in the Upper House by this restless nobleman on the articles of peace, who succeeded in carrying a majority with him; and next we find him bringing before the House, on the 15th of December, the old Bill, defeated again and again—which now, in substance, by virtue of a compact with new allies, was carried at last. The Bill provided "that all persons in places of profit and trust, and all the common-council men in corporations who should be at any meeting for Divine worship (where there were above ten persons more than the family) in which the Common Prayer was not used, or where the Queen and the Princess Sophia were not prayed for, should upon conviction forfeit their place of trust or profit—the witnesses making oath within ten days, and the prosecution being within three months after the offence; and such persons were to continue incapable of any employment till they should depose, that for a whole year together they had been at no conventicle."[1]

The Bill was supported in the Lords by old opponents, and carried without a division; and on its

[1] Burnet's "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 585.

reaching the House of Commons, "they added a penalty on the offender of forty pounds, which was to be given to the informer." The Whig excuse, a very sorry one, for this departure from their former proceedings and principles is, that by yielding, "it might go towards quieting the fears of those who seemed to think the Church was still in danger, till that Act passed."[1] Thus, says Calamy, writing at the time, "after fifty years' exclusion from the public churches by the Act of Uniformity, during the one-half of which they were exposed to great rigours and severities, though during the other half they have had more liberty, are the poor Dissenters excluded from the service of the State. So far are we from any hopes of a coalition which has been so often talked of, that nothing will do but an entire submission."[2]

About this time died Henry Compton, Bishop of London, who, at the Revolution, figured in military costume on the side of the Prince of Orange. Whether or not because he was disappointed of the primacy,—which his rank and his services were thought by himself, and by others, to deserve,—certainly he forsook his old friends, and, abandoning Low Church principles, espoused the policy held in favour by Queen

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[1] Burnet's "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 585.

[2] "Abridgment," p. 725. In the Appendix to Calamy's "Own Life," may be seen a list of queries on the Schism Bill, vol. ii. p. 543. That Bill will be described on p. 77.

Anne. In Convocation and in Parliament, he ranked on the side opposed to Tenison and Burnet; and, rising into the confidence of his Royal Mistress, he became her ecclesiastical adviser. In a very eulogistic funeral sermon for him, it is stated, "He gave her Majesty such reasonable (and to her own pious inclinations such agreeable) advice upon the vacancy of two Dioceses, as occasioned their being well filled when 'twas little expected." And in celebration of the Bishop's martial and moral temperament, on both of which he seems to have prided himself, the preacher admiringly exclaimed, "He was never seen to be afraid, or concerned at danger. In the midst of storms he himself was calm; and in the midst of fire, in a literal as well as figurative sense, he himself was cool."[1]

Burnet, on the other hand, not likely to regard him with favour—dryly observes of Compton—"He was a generous and good-natured man, but easy and weak, and much in the power of others."[2]

Compton died in 1713, and was succeeded by John Robinson, one of those "decent worthy prelates," who "from their quiet thrones, have sunk into oblivion." "On this occasion there was a return to the old practice of rewarding services to the State by high ecclesiastical dignity. Robinson, like Pace of old,

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[1] "Funeral Sermon for the Bishop of London," by Dr. Gooch.
[2] "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 630.

was a Diplomatist rather than a Divine. He had done useful service as Ambassador at Warsaw, far more useful, distinguished as a Plenipotentiary at the all-important treaty of Utrecht. He had held high preferment; a stall, a deanery, a bishopric,—that of Bristol."[1] Moreover, he had been appointed to the office of Privy Seal, on the death of the Duke of Newcastle, in 1711,—a combination of civil with ecclesiastical preferment, which, like rewards in the Church for service in the State, was a return to an old practice, now long since gone for ever.

As this change occurred in the See of London, there came, in appropriate sequence to the intolerant Act just now described, the famous Schism Bill. It was hatched by Bolingbroke, whilst Atterbury sat by the nest encouraging the incubation. In the Address of the Lower House of Convocation, in 1704, mention was made of allowing persons to act as schoolmasters, "without such licence from the Ordinary as is required by the Act of Uniformity and the 77th Canon;" and in the Lords' debate about the Church being in danger, Archbishop Sharp had alluded to the same thing. Now, therefore, in harmony with the revival of old intolerance, and in violation of the Revolution policy, this Bill proposed that no one should keep school, or act as tutor, who did not conform to the Church of England, and

[1] Milman's "Annals of St. Paul's," p. 456.

obtain a licence from the Diocesan ; failure in doing so was to entail imprisonment. No licence was to be granted without a certificate that the party applying for it had received the sacrament at church within the year before. Sir William Wyndham introduced the Bill in the House of Commons on the 12th of May, 1714. Sir Peter King, Mr. Hampden, Sir Joseph Jekyll, and Robert Walpole, spoke against it ; but General Stanhope excelled in his enlightened opposition. "He showed in particular the ill consequence of this law, as it would of course occasion foreign education, which, on the one hand, would drain the kingdom of great sums of money, and, which was still worse, would fill the tender minds of young men with prejudices against their own country. He illustrated and strengthened his argument by the example of the English Popish seminaries abroad, which, he said, were so pernicious to Great Britain, that instead of making new laws to encourage foreign education, he could wish those already in force against Papists were mitigated, and that they should be allowed a certain number of schools."[1] In spite of this convincing argument the Bill was carried by a majority of 237 against 126. In the Lords the second reading was moved by Bolingbroke, who probably urged the sophism he expressed in a letter to Wyndham : "The evil effect is without remedy, and may therefore

[1] Stanhope's (Mahon's) "History of England," vol. i. p. 81.

deserve indulgence; but the evil cause is to be prevented, and can therefore be entitled to none." Lord Wharton justly contended, that to call that schism in England which had been established in Scotland, was truly absurd; and that it would be only consistent in the advocates of this Bill to bring in another making Episcopacy schismatical across the border. Lord Halifax insisted on the contrast between this infringement of the rights of Dissenting subjects with the encouragement afforded to Walloons and Huguenots. Lord Townsend cited Holland as an example of the good effects of free education.[1] But all in vain. The Lord Treasurer wished to soften the most rigorous clauses, and absented himself at the final vote; amendments were proposed, a few of which were carried, to the effect, that Dissenters might have schoolmistresses to teach their children to read; that the conviction of offenders should be transferred from justices of the peace to courts of law; that a right of appeal should be allowed; and that tutors in noblemen's families should be exempt from the new statute. It was further moved on the Tory side that the Act should be extended to Ireland; and thus finally framed, the whole Bill was adopted by 77 peers against 72. The Bill went back to the Commons to be adopted by them, after an attempt to alter one of the amend-

[1] Stanhope's "History," vol. i. p. 82.

ments. "And thus was passed through both Houses one of the worst Acts that ever defiled the Statute Book."[1] But it never took effect; for the day on which its operation was to commence, proved to be the day of the Queen's death. The new Government suspended its execution, and afterwards it was repealed.

Convocation was permitted to enter on business in November, 1710, and the political change which had taken place made itself felt in Henry the Seventh's Chapel. The members were in an exultant mood. Atterbury was chosen prolocutor; a licence to debate was allowed; certain points for discussion were specified;[2] but the Archbishop was not, as is usual, appointed president.[3] Nor was his grace, or his right reverend brethren, consulted relative to the business. "These things," said Kennet, who had been set aside as a candidate for the chair, "looked plausible for the Church, but were suspected to be meant for the State only, and to blacken the late ministry, as if the new set were all Christians and saints."[4] Atterbury drew up a representation on the state of the Church, which was accepted in his own House, and rejected in the other.

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[1] Stanhope's "History," vol. i. p. 84.

[2] The topics are enumerated by Lathbury, p. 408.

[3] "A new licence was sent, February 16th, appointing the Archbishop president, and adding other bishops to the quorum."—Lathbury, p. 409.

[4] Boyer's "Anne," p. 110. Lathbury, p. 409.

William Whiston was professor of mathematics in the University of Cambridge—a man of great learning and eccentric genius, bold in the utterance of opinion, and strong in personal prejudices and resentments. Few men were more talked of in his day. His position, not at all owing to rank or wealth, was a singularly high one. Whether he is to be ranked amongst Churchmen or Dissenters it is hard to say; for though he did not identify himself with any of the denominations, he occasionally at least conducted worship after a fashion of his own. His mind was occupied with two ideas, which he maintained incessantly, during a long life—first, that the Athanasian Creed is most unscriptural, unreasonable, and pernicious; secondly, that the Apostolical Constitutions, as they are called, present the ideal of a Church, to which all Christians should conform. In a book entitled, "An Historical Preface to Primitive Christianity," he asserted what was offensive to Churchmen; and now that Convocation was in a favourable position, and the Lower House felt its strength renewed, some of the members determined to take up Whiston's case, and seek an authoritative condemnation of his heresies. Accordingly the House agreed that a Representation of the State of Religion and the Church should be prepared, and after certain points had been selected, the composition of the document fell into Atterbury's hands. He set to work in his own slashing style to expose the evils of the day,

and amongst them he denounced all such as dissented from the Church, especially Socinians and Quakers; meetings for worship held by the latter are pointed at as the scandal of the age, and those who sympathized with William Whiston are described as "the determined enemies of all religion and goodness."[1] This "Representation," however consonant with the views of the Lower House, the Upper House would not adopt; and as to any proceedings in Whiston's case, the cautious Archbishop expressed an opinion that there were great difficulties in the way of censuring the book, or condemning the author. The Upper House, in accordance with his judgment, resolved to address her Majesty on the subject, and seek for light in the midst of the darkness which enveloped the question. The case was referred to the judges, and eight out of twelve gave it as their opinion that Convocation had jurisdiction in cases of heresy; but reserved their judgment in this particular case, intimating however that they might alter their opinion on further inquiry. The other four concluded that Convocation has no power over cases of heresy. The Queen's Council supported the majority of the Bench, and an answer being returned accordingly, the bishops took up *the question of the book alone, without adopting*

[1] Atterbury's "Correspondence," etc., vol. ii. p. 322. The "Representation" was printed and dispersed, and brought out a reply entitled, "The Nation Vindicated from the Aspersions Cast on it in a late Pamphlet," etc.

proceedings against the author. Arian and heretical propositions were extracted and were sent down to the Lower House. Atterbury and his friends wished to pursue the matter, and it was again brought before the Queen ; but no answer was returned ; and when, months after, two bishops were deputed to wait on her Majesty, they were told the document forwarded could not be found. Other deputations followed, to receive the same answer, "The paper is lost." There ended the business. But certain topics recommended by the Queen were considered, and a report was agreed upon by both Houses.[1]

Atterbury's "Representation of the Present State of Religion" occasioned new differences between the two Houses. They could not unite on the subject. Drafts were prepared on one side and rejected on the other, so that the proceedings became involved in complication and mystery, and to seek a way through the labyrinth, would answer now no useful purpose. If we are to believe a gossiping letter, Burnet reported, most likely in reference to the topics specified by her Majesty for the consideration of the Clergy, that the Lord Treasurer said, he had bamboozled the Convocation by setting them to work only to burn their fingers.[2]

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[1] Cardwell's "Synodalia," 764.

[2] "Wisdom of Looking Backwards," p. 131. Quoted by Lathbury, p. 417.

In December, 1711, Convocation assembled again, when fresh differences arose between the Houses:—one respecting lay baptism, which, by members of the Lower House, was declared to be invalid; but the Bishops, in different forms of expression, virtually admitted its validity.

In February, 1713, Dr. Stanhope was chosen prolocutor, but nothing of any interest occurred, except the adoption of an Address to the Queen, on her recovering from illness; and the preparation by the Bishops, of forms of service for the visitation of prisoners, and the admission of converts from Popery. In June, 1714, a dissension arose on the merits of a book, entitled, "The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity," published by Dr. Samuel Clarke. The views he advanced were deemed unsound, and the Lower House applied to the Upper, stating that his doctrines were inconsistent with the Catholic faith of the English Church. Clarke drew up a qualifying paper, which satisfied the Bishops, but not the inferior clergy.

The business of Parliament and Convocation came to an end on the 9th of July, when a prorogation took place by the Queen in person. In three weeks Anne was no more. She was interred in Henry the Seventh's Chapel, on the 24th of August, 1714. "Her unwieldy frame," we are assured, "filled a coffin larger even than that of her gigantic spouse," by whose side she was buried in the same vault with

her royal sister; not after a manner befitting her illustrious rank, in the estimation of Samuel Wesley, who, in his elegy on Atterbury, brings in the Queen, and says,—

> "When Anna rests with kindred ashes laid,
> What funeral honours grace her injured shade?
> A few faint tapers glimmered through the night,
> And scanty sable shocked the loyal sight.
> Though millions wailed her, none composed her train,
> Compelled to grieve, forbidden to complain."

In these lines the Jacobin temper is manifest. Wesley sympathized with Atterbury in his political proclivities; the latter, having been made Dean of Westminster a year before he lost his Royal mistress, would, with a feeling of affection, as well as a sense of duty, perform the last rites for the last sovereign of the house of Stuart.

RELIGION IN ENGLAND UNDER GEORGE I.

CHAPTER IV.

1714–1727.

ON the death of Anne, Atterbury, both Dean of Westminster and Bishop of Rochester, suggested to Lord Bolingbroke, that James Stuart should be immediately proclaimed at Charing Cross, and expressed his willingness to lead the procession, dressed in his lawn sleeves.[1] Bolingbroke being cautious enough not to plunge into such a desperate enterprise, Atterbury is said to have exclaimed, with an oath, "There is the best cause in Europe lost from want of spirit." A very different person from Atterbury at that very moment took precedence in the Royal proclamation of George of Hanover. Thomas Bradbury was then a popular Independent minister, officiating at a meeting-house in Fetter Lane. "Politics were a part of his religion;" and whilst Sacheverell made the pulpit a rostrum for the proclamation of High Church authority, Bradbury made it a tribune for the assertion of ecclesi-

[1] The original authority for this anecdote I have not ascertained; but it is adopted by so careful an historian as Earl Stanhope. Hist. vol. i. p. 94.

astical and civil liberty. "Bold Bradbury," he was called by the Queen; and the story goes that Harley proposed he should be offered a bishopric, with the hope of silencing the troublesome orator. That would have been quite as useless; as was the violence employed to put him down; for neither threat nor bribe had any influence over a nature like his. The populace, in the riot of 1700, burnt his meeting-house; "he was," as he says, "lampooned in pamphlets, derided in newspapers, threatened by great men, and mobbed by the baser sort," but none of these things moved him. Referring to the commencement of his ministry,—he began to preach at eighteen,—he could say, "I bless God, from that hour I have never known the fear of man." On the summer Sunday morning when the Queen was between life and death, he walked through Smithfield in a pensive mood, probably on the way to Fetter Lane, when Burnet, who resided in Clerkenwell, drove by in his coach, and seeing the dissenting minister, whom he very well knew, asked him, "why he looked so very grave." "I am thinking," replied Bradbury, "whether I shall have the constancy and resolution of that noble company of martyrs, whose ashes are deposited in this place; for I most assuredly expect to see similar times of violence and persecution, and that I shall be called to suffer in a like cause." Bradbury identified the reign of Anne with the reign of intolerance; and Burnet at once raised

his hopes by informing him of her Majesty's precarious condition. He was himself going to the palace, and promised to send a message to his Nonconformist friend when all was over. The Queen died whilst Bradbury was preaching; but by a preconcerted signal,—the dropping of a handkerchief from the gallery,—intelligence of the event, from the Bishop, reached Bradbury through his brother, before the sermon finished. The preacher restrained himself until the concluding prayer, when he implored the Divine blessing on the Hanoverian heir, George, King of Great Britain and Ireland; and then gave out the 89th psalm from Patrick's collection. It is said,—one would hope it is not true,—that he afterwards preached a funeral sermon, from the words, "Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her, for she is a king's daughter."[1]

Bradbury prided himself on being the first person to proclaim the Protestant succession; and his joy at the change in the Government was shared, not only by all Dissenters, but by Churchmen of Whig principles. Of course Burnet was delighted; and White Kennet, afterwards Bishop of Peterborough, wrote to a friend, "I am fixed in this opinion, that King George is one of the honestest men, and one of the wisest princes in the world."[2]

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[1] Wilson says he thinks the story not improbable; and says he had seen a sermon preached at the time from a passage almost equally pointed.—"Dissenting Churches," vol. ii. p. 514.

[2] Ellis's "Original Letters."

In Glasgow a mob, professedly Presbyterian, most inconsistently proclaimed their joy at what they hailed as the return of toleration, by breaking into the Episcopal chapel and driving out the clergyman. But a Lutheran king from Hanover seemed as odious to Nonjurors and High Churchmen as a Calvinist king from Holland. No wonder that men like Atterbury were incensed at seeing such an occupant of the throne; and multitudes there were who would have been glad to have beheld the Jacobite Bishop issuing from the Deanery in canonicals, to proclaim the Stuart exile Sovereign of these realms. Indeed, Jacobite mobs assembled at Bristol, Norwich, Birmingham, and other places, to clamour against Anne's successor.

At his first Council, Sept. 22, he took occasion to express his determination to support and maintain the Churches of England and Scotland, adding, "which I am of opinion may be effectually done, without the least impairing the toleration allowed by law to Protestant Dissenters."

The ministers of the three denominations in London, as soon as they could, waited on the new Sovereign, to express their warm attachment to his person and Crown, and their joy at his Majesty's recent declaration. A hundred of the brethren crowded together before the King, who stood there, "rather good than august, with a dark tie wig, a plain coat, waistcoat, and breeches of snuff-coloured cloth,

with stockings of the same colour, and a blue riband over all." [1] The courtier-like Dr. Williams, founder of the Library that bears his name, took the lead,—he and the rest of the party dressed in black cloaks, "according to the fashion of the court on that occasion." "Pray, sir," said a nobleman to Mr. Bradbury, who was there, "is this a funeral?" "Yes, my lord," he retorted; "it is the funeral of the Schism Bill, and the resurrection of liberty." [2]

Archbishop Tenison, aged, feeble, and tottering, placed the crown on George's head, and soon afterwards cheerfully sang his *Nunc Dimittis.* And Atterbury, taking part in the coronation ceremony, offered to relinquish the chair of state and the royal canopy, which were perquisites of his office—an offer which, whatever the motive, was decidedly rejected.

One of the first acts of the new reign was to issue a proclamation for the greater encouragement of religion and morality; saying, "We will upon all occasions distinguish persons of piety and virtue by marks of our royal favour;" and forbidding subjects of every degree to play on the Lord's day "at dice, cards, or any other game whatsoever;"—a proclamation much criticized by Tories and High Churchmen, who pointed at the infamous Lord Wharton,

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[1] Horace Walpole's description.
[2] Calamy's "Own Life," vol. ii. p. 301.

at the time a favourite Privy Councillor. The inconsistency, though unjustifiable, had, however, parallels in proclamations issued by monarchs worse than George I., and very different from him in political and ecclesiastical principles.

Addison gives it as a common report circulated at the time by "the High Flyers," that all the churches in London were shut up, and that if a clergyman walked the street, ten to one he would be knocked down by a schismatic.[1] Such vile rumours roused revenge in the provinces; and riots occurred in the Tory county of Stafford, and elsewhere. "High Church and Ormond for ever!" was a popular cry; the duke of Ormond having, in fear of an impeachment by the Whigs, just escaped to France, saying to Lord Oxford, then in the Tower, "Farewell, Oxford, without a head;" to which Oxford replied, "Farewell, Duke, without a duchy." Mobs pulled down meeting-houses, demolished Dissenters' furniture, and committed other acts of violence.[2]

Manchester was a scene of immense disturbance. The bells rang out merry peals at Warrington, whilst

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[1] "Freeholder," No. lii. p. 7.

[2] An account of damage done in these riots I saw some years ago among the MSS. in Dr. Williams's Library; and one of the Military Knights of Windsor, I remember, had in his possession numbers of extracts from newspapers, showing the immense mischief done in Staffordshire.

people on the birthday of Prince James Edward, the Pretender, dressed in Sunday clothes, marched about crying, "The Church in danger! Down with the Dissenters! God save James III.!" The Jacobites of Manchester assembled at beat of drum to parade the old-fashioned picturesque streets of the now modern commercial city, denouncing all Whigs, all Low Churchmen, and all Nonconformists.

Rebellion followed the riots of 1715. An outbreak in the Highlands spread southward. The Jacobite insurgents made an attempt on Edinburgh, and marching across the border, entered Lancashire. There Roman Catholicism lingered, and kept a tenacious hold on the affections of certain English families. In one of the glens of the wilder portion of the county, near Holme, in a grand old park, the Townley family had lived since the days of King Alfred; and now, in a Tudor mansion, with gateway, chapel, sacristry, and library, they carried on mediæval worship under the ministrations of a priest, who said masses "*pro rege nostro Jacobo*;" he also performed baptisms, and kept anniversaries recorded in a curious register book, between the vigil of St. John the Baptist, 1705, down to the end of December, 1722.[1] It was just the place to become a centre of Jacobite influence and action—and here, and in other ancient houses, and among the commonalty too,—

[1] Report of Hist. MSS., Com. vol. iv. p. 413.

for many of the lower classes were in this respect in full sympathy with the upper,—the Chevalier found earnest supporters ready to fight for the restoration of the Stuart line. Many an Episcopalian Tory also was ready to join the rebel ranks, though some of the Protestant sympathizers were taunted by Popish friends, as being never valiant, except in drinking favourite toasts. Even Scotch Presbyterians espoused the cause of King James; but when fallen among the Lancashire Presbyterian witches, they yielded to their fascination and changed the white cockade for Hanoverian colours. In London, and in other parts of the country, clergymen were found who in opinion and feeling were one with the northern Jacobites, and things began to wear a serious aspect in the estimation of the ruling powers. The Government actively employed itself in subduing the alarm and repressing the rebellion; and Whig Churchmen and zealous Dissenters took up arms on the Royal side. One Woods, a minister at Chowbent, figures in the history of that day, as raising a regiment out of his large congregation, "to draw up on Cuerden Green" with "scythes put on straight poles," or with "spades," or with "bill-hooks." And it is a tradition, that he drew his sword on the only member who evinced any fear, ordering the "coward to leave the men, and go home to the women." Warm work went on in the North; bloody battles were fought at Sheriff Muir, and on the banks of the Ribble, near the town of

Preston. Barricades were raised in the streets, and shots were fired from the windows; but the Hanoverians were too strong for the Jacobites; a total defeat befel the latter. Soon afterwards, numbers of prisoners were brought to London to lie in the Tower and in Newgate, and then to be beheaded on Tower Hill, or hanged at Tyburn.[1]

In the same year, 1715, important changes occurred in the Episcopate. In the spring, March the 17th, the career of Gilbert Burnet came to an end, in his house, St. John's Square, Clerkenwell. The public conduct of this eager bustling prelate has been so conspicuous in our history, that no further notice of his character as an ecclesiastical politician is required; but it is pleasant to add the account given of his private habits.

"His time, the only treasure of which he seemed covetous, was employed in one regular and uniform manner. His constant health permitted him to be an early riser: he was seldom in bed later than five o'clock in the morning during summer, or than six in the winter. Private meditation took up the two first hours, and the last half-hour of the day. His first and last appearance to his family was at the morning and evening prayers, which were always read by himself, though his chaplains were present. He drank his tea in company with his children, and took the opportunity of instructing them in religion. He went through the Old

[1] Halley's "Lancashire," vol. ii. p. 345.

and New Testament with them three times, giving his own comment on some portion of it, for an hour every morning. When this was over, he retired to his study, where he seldom spent less than six, often more than eight hours a day, the rest of his time was taken up with business, exercise, and necessary rest, or bestowed on friendly visits and cheerful meals." [1]

Burnet was succeeded in his diocese by William Talbot, translated from Oxford, a name of little renown, except as father of Lord Chancellor Talbot; and soon after, in 1715, Benjamin Hoadley, who, ten years before, had made himself popular by his sermon before the Lord Mayor, against the doctrine of Divine right, was raised to the Bishopric of Bangor, in the room of John Evans, the deceased diocesan. In the summer of the following year, 1716, Lloyd, Bishop of Worcester expired in the huge rambling Episcopal palace, known as Hartlebury Castle, after reaching the age of 90. This old Revolutionary magnate, so fond of studying unfulfilled prophecy and of fixing a date for things to come, survived the period when he calculated that Rome would be destroyed;—for he told two young Vaudois friends that if they lived to the year 1716, they might stand on the top of their mountains and

[1] Life of the author, appended to his "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 722. There is a funeral sermon for Burnet by Charles Owen, on 1 Sam. xxv. 1, very eulogistic, representing his death as "truly a public calamity."

warm their hands in the flames of the papal city.[1] On the death of Lloyd, Hough was translated to Worcester, and Edward Chandler followed, the renowned defender of Oxford College rights, as Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. But the most important episcopal change at this period occurred at the close of the year 1715, when the aged Archbishop Tenison passed away, just before Christmas. Like Burnet, he had private virtues, which could not be denied by his most virulent enemies; and his legacy of £1000 to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, towards the endowment of two American bishops, and his foundation of a Library still bearing his name, tended to soften the asperity of feeling excited against him. William Wake, already noticed as the opponent of Atterbury, was now exalted to the Primacy, owing, as was supposed, to an able speech he made, when Bishop of Lincoln, on the trial of Sacheverell; but it will be seen, as we proceed, that, although inimical to High Churchmanship of the Sacheverell type, he did not, as Archbishop of Canterbury, manifest the same liberal disposition as he had displayed whilst Bishop of Lincoln. Within two years after his appointment to the Primacy, he engaged in a correspondence which makes a considerable figure in the ecclesiastical history of his times. In the year 1717 France was in a state of great

[1] Calamy's "Own Life," vol. ii. p. 384.

agitation in consequence of the papal Bull called *Unigenitus*,[1] that being the first word occurring in the document. It was levelled against the Jansenists; it fell in with the policy of the Jesuits, their determined enemies; and by many staunch members of the Gallican Church was deemed an act of aggression upon their cherished liberties. Amidst this state of things the correspondence now referred to took place. It was carried on chiefly between the Archbishop and Mr. Beauvoir, Chaplain to the English Embassy at Paris. It seems to have originated in a communication to his Grace from the celebrated Dupin of the Sorbonne, whose work on Ecclesiastical writers is well known in the literary world. He had heard from the English chaplain, that the Archbishop had in one of his letters made honourable mention of him; and in consequence of this circumstance, he wrote to his Grace, expressing desire for a union between the English and Gallican Churches, remarking "that the difference between them on most points was not so great as to render a reconciliation impracticable, and that it was his earnest wish that

[1] "*Unigenitus Dei Filius*"—"Only-begotten Son of God." The Bull, dated 1713, condemned one hundred and one propositions extracted from Quesnel's "*Le Nouv. Test. en françois, avec des réflexions*," etc. Quesnel was a Jansenist. Amongst the condemned propositions are these, "Fides est prima gratia et fons omnium aliorum," "Lectio Sacræ Scripturæ est pro omnibus." Cardinal de Noailles, Archbishop of Paris, and many of the French clergy protested against this Bull.

all Christians should be united in one sheepfold." Wake replied, insisting upon the purity of the English Church in faith, worship, and government, stating at the same time as his own persuasion, that there were few things in it which even his learned and pious French correspondent would desire to see changed. He then took occasion to urge the maintenance and enlargement of Gallican liberties, for which the disputes arising out of the Bull *Unigenitus* furnished a favourable occasion; also, in connection with this advice, he expressed his readiness to concur in the promotion of union between the rational Protestant and the Roman Catholic Churches of Europe. Another brilliant ornament of the Sorbonne, Piers de Gerardin, in a lecture which he delivered in that University, exhorted his brethren to revise the rules of the Gallican Church, so as to prove to the Church of England, that they did not hold as an article of faith every decision of the Pope of Rome, and moreover spoke of union with Anglicans as more hopeful than union with Greeks. Beauvoir, after this, diligently corresponded with the Archbishop on the subject, and the Archbishop himself wrote several letters in reply. Dupin also prepared what is called his "Commonitorium," or Advice, relating to the method of an ecclesiastical reunion of England and France; and commented at large on the Thirty-nine Articles, showing how far he could adopt, and how far he must contradict them. Wake

did not go into minute particulars, but earnestly insisted on the renunciation of the Pope's supremacy by the Gallican advocates of union, as essential to success. He then laid down the principle that each national Church is competent to manage its own affairs; and, that respecting doctrinal belief, Churches desiring union should agree as far as possible, and then tolerate each other's unavoidable differences. Notwithstanding, he was for "purging out of the public Offices of the Church, all such things as hinder a perfect communion in Divine Service, so that persons coming from one Church to the other might join in prayers, the holy sacrament, and the public service." [1]

This correspondence, carried on secretly for a time, before long became divulged; the Jesuits rose up in arms; the Abbé Du Bois interfered; Dupin died, and the whole affair came to nothing. At a subsequent period, and in some measure springing out of this interchange of views between Wake and Dupin, the former engaged in another correspondence with the celebrated Dr. Courayer, who, in 1727, was moved, for some reason, strange in a foreigner, to publish a defence of Orders in the Church of England, based upon documents forwarded to him by the Primate. Such an act aroused the indigna-

[1] Mosheim's "Ecclesiastical History," edited by Maclaine vol. vi., fourth appendix, pp. 126–195.

tion of his French brethren, and in consequence he came over to England, and was kindly received by the Archbishop. He never openly abandoned the Church of Rome, nor formally declared himself a member of the Church of England, but occasionally attended mass in London, and occasionally worshipped at the parish church of Ealing. He lived to the age of ninety, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Such a peculiar connection between an Archbishop of Canterbury and two persons who, while advocating Gallican ecclesiastical liberty, did not repudiate the authority of the Pope of Rome and the attempt thus made to effect some union between the two Churches, very naturally led to much misapprehension; and Wake became suspected, if not of betraying, yet of imperilling, the Protestant interests of the Church of which he was the chief pastor; and some years afterwards an express charge was brought against him by a zealous ecclesiastical reformer. But he is not fairly open to any such charge. He contended for the purity of his own Communion, and made no concessions to the Gallican Church such as implied any leaning to Roman Catholicism. But it is a wonder that he should have held out any hope of union between two communities so different as the Churches of England and France. Spiritual sympathies between devout members of the two fellowships,—such men as Pascal and

Fénelon on the one side, and such men as himself and some of his brethren on the other,—might well be encouraged, on the ground of a common elementary faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world—the great bond which binds together all Christian souls of every land of every age;—and in accordance with that broad impregnable principle, spiritual sympathies might have been wisely recommended between Anglicans and all other true believers in the Redeemer, at home and abroad. But any formal union between two organized communions so differently constituted as a Church built on the Book of Common Prayer, and a Church built upon the Missal and Tridentine decrees, was a dream too Utopian, one might have supposed, to enter the mind of so thoughtful and sagacious a man as Archbishop Wake. Plausible schemes may easily be concocted for bringing together Episcopalian Churches of strongly divergent faith and practice; but Episcopacy in common, however strongly it may be held, and however highly it may be estimated, can never prove a ligature strong enough to hold together such a society as that which is professedly based on the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and other societies based upon the old Church principles, against which that Reformation was a protest, as it stood face to face before them in stoutest antagonism.

But whatever may be thought of the communi-

cations carried on between Wake and Dupin, it rested by no means on an original idea. Ever since the Reformation, schemes for re-uniting the severed portions of Christendom had been proposed and discussed; and during the seventeenth century John Dury had been indefatigable in seeking to promote that attractive object. Towards the close of that period Leibnitz, the celebrated German philosopher, had corresponded with Spinola, a Romanist divine, in the hope of bringing Lutherans and Catholics together. Crowned heads had favoured the scheme; Electors of Hanover, Dukes of Wolfenbüttel, and other potentates, had backed the theologians who were seeking to contrive points of assimilation between alienated Churches. Even the Eagle of Meaux, Bishop Bossuet, instead of using that pointed beak and those sharp talons of his, had caught something of a dovelike temper, so as at least to enter into friendly negotiations, always saving the rights of his own infallible Church. Thus terms of armistice, if not treaties of alliance, had been the order of the day for some good while, when Wake took up his pen to respond to Dupin. They only failed where others had done; and both deserve the credit, belonging to all who aim at a Christian Eirenicon, of cultivating sentiments proper to the Gospel of peace.

The dissenting ministers of London, in the month of August, as news came slowly from Lancashire

about the rebellion, waited on the King to attest their loyalty, when they were assured that the treatment their brethren had received in some parts of the country excited Royal concern, and that a full compensation should be made for their sufferings.[1] The King appreciated the valuable services they had rendered him and his family, and felt anxious that they should be released from the legalized injustice of the Occasional Conformity Act. He conversed with Nicholson, the Bishop of Carlisle, on the subject, who told him that eighteen of the bishops opposed the repeal. "What reasons have they for not consenting to the proposed Bill of repeal?" he immediately asked. "Because the Bench, in supporting the Act, thought it would be for the service of the Established Church," was the reply. "But have not the Dissenters since that time given good proofs of their loyalty?" rejoined the sovereign. "Yes, sir," added the prelate; "but the toleration was thought a sufficient recompense for their fidelity to King William, and the security of that is all that the honest men amongst them seem to desire." [2]

Fresh disturbances occurred in May, 1716. On the one side, people were barbarously treated for

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[1] Calamy's "Own Life," vol. ii. p. 353.

[2] State Papers. Record Office. Dom. 1716, March 19. Letter of the Bishop of Carlisle.

wearing oak-leaves in their hats as a Jacobite demonstration; and on the other side, a Nonconformist Meeting-house at Cambridge, where an audience of 1000 had assembled for worship, was attacked, plundered, and almost demolished; the scholars of Clare Hall, well known as liberal Loyalists, being shamefully insulted. Soon afterwards, when the rebellious Scotch noblemen had been executed, a clergyman was hung at Tyburn for treason, declaring that he died a son of the true Church of England, not of the schismatical branch, which sprung up under the Prince of Orange. He desired the clergy of the Revolution Church "to consider the bottom they stood upon, when their succession was grounded on an invalid deprivation of Catholic Bishops by a pretended Act of Parliament."[1]

In the spring of next year, 1717, we find the three denominations at court again, following the dignified Dr. Calamy,—with his handsome features, curled wig, his large bands, and his flowing gown,—who presented an Address on the restoration of peace. "His Majesty," says the presenter, "who used to receive us on such occasions standing, was now sitting under a canopy, and I was led up to him under my arm, by Mr. Secretary Stanhope, through a lane of noblemen and attendants." The king

[1] Calamy's "Own Life," p. 357.

thanked the Protestant Dissenters for their loyal address, and said, "I will give orders for the speedy payment of the damages they sustained in the late tumults." Encouraged by marks of royal favour, and feeling that the sun was rising on them, "after a night of tempest and of horror," Dissenters took courage to move for a redress of grievances; and, accordingly, meetings were held in different parts of the country to promote the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts, and also of the Test and Corporation laws.

On the 13th of December, 1718, Earl Stanhope brought a Bill into the House of Lords for repealing part of the Act of the tenth year of her late Majesty. He eloquently asserted the rights of Dissenters to the full privileges of citizenship, condemning oppressive laws as the creation of troublous times. Sunderland and Stamford supported the motion, but the new Archbishop of Canterbury, and Dawes, Archbishop of York, opposed it; the former,—probably in allusion to De Foe's well-known sentiments,—contending "that the scandalous practice of occasional conformity was condemned by the soberest part of the Dissenters themselves; and he could not forbear saying that some among them made a wrong use of the favour and indulgence that was shown them upon the Revolution, though they had the least share in that happy event." Such a strain of remark could not but be exceed-

ingly offensive to Nonconformists, who, with few exceptions, had most heartily rejoiced in the expulsion of the Stuarts, though, for want of power, they could effect little themselves, and who properly felt that what the prelate called "favour and indulgence," was only a concession of rights to which they were as much entitled as His Grace could be to the honours and emoluments of his high position. Other members of the Bench followed on the same side; but Hoadley, Gibson, Kennet, and Willis, Bishop of Gloucester, earnestly advocated the Bill. Kennet, with his black patch, standing up in his lawn sleeves, became so excited as to exclaim,—much to the horror of some of his brethren, and also of Lord Lansdown, who smartly rebuked him,—"the clergy of Charles the First had promoted arbitrary measures and persecutions, until they first brought scandal and contempt upon the clergy, and at last ruin both on Church and State." Yet such really was the fact; and it was only honest and wise in the Right Reverend prelate to warn his brethren against following a bad example.

For the Bill there were 86; against it, 68; with this small majority it was deemed expedient to drop that part which referred to the Test and Corporation Acts, and for the present to be satisfied with the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism laws.

In the Commons, when the Bill reached them, there arose a long and warm debate; almost all the eminent men on both sides taking part; but, their speeches being unreported, no traces of their arguments remain. However the measure passed, by 243 against 202.[1]

Convocation was permitted to meet for business in the year 1717; and in May we discover the Lower House busily at work upon two productions of the New Bishop of Bangor; First: *A Preservative against the Principles and Practices of the Non-jurors, both in Church and State;* and secondly: *A Sermon preached before the King, at St. James', on the words, "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world"* (John xviii. 36). In the first of these there is very little to which any one could object, except Non-jurors and Jacobites; but the second is very different.

Some of the principles laid down are so similar to those adopted by ultra-Nonconformists, and lead so directly to either disestablishment or a thorough alteration in the Episcopalian Church, that it is difficult to understand how Hoadley could reconcile his teaching with his position. However that might be, he brought down on himself the wrath of the Lower House, which came to the conclusion, that the Bishop subverted all government and discipline, impugned the royal supremacy in cases ecclesiasti-

[1] "Parliamentary Hist." vol. vii. pp. 567, 586.

cal, and undermined all legislative authority in the enforcement of obedience. Foreseeing the storm likely to arise, Government interfered before any action had been taken on the report; and at once prorogued Convocation until the 22nd of November. What followed in connection with this business must not be identified with the history of that body, which has enough of noisy disturbance to answer for, without being exposed to charges of which it was innocent. The fact is, that "the Bangorian Controversy," was taken out of the hands of Convocation, and the actual battle was fought outside the walls of the Jerusalem Chamber and Henry the Seventh's chapel.

I shall not load these pages with wearisome details of a dispute which has long since ceased to interest either the Church or the world; but shall simply remark that the discussion employed the pens of innumerable writers; that Hoadley's doctrines were of such a nature as to displease both Erastians and High Churchmen;[1] that it is not unlikely the Bishop himself failed to apprehend the logical application of his own opinions, as he first stated them in his famous sermon before the King; that in defence of himself he greatly modified what he had

[1] Strangely enough, Hoadley set himself afterwards to vindicate the Corporation and Test Acts.—"The Common Rights of Subjects Defended." 1719.

said; that numerous questions arose as the controversy went on, not thought of at the outset; and that, before it terminated, personalities were imported of the most offensive description. What one said to another was repeated, and then denied in the coarsest style, a bishop even pledging his salvation that a brother bishop affirmed so and so; whilst that bishop retorted, "God so help me here, and judge me at last, if I did." "It is to be feared," says Calamy, "this unhappy squabble did a great deal of mischief."[1] No doubt it did.

And so did the manner of conducting another controversy at about the same time, within the circle of Dissent. Dr. Samuel Clarke, who was dissatisfied with the Athanasian Creed, and still more William Whiston, who went further than Clarke, had considerable influence among Nonconformists of "a liberal way of thinking." Whiston, though he was called a Churchman, mixed much with Dissenters whilst advocating his own views; and he set up a form of service on his own favourite model of the Apostolical Constitutions. Catching the spirit of free inquiry which was in the wind, and looking to the quarter whence it blew, certain Dissenters, in the pleasant city of Exeter, proceeded to greater lengths than had been reached by some sympathetic brethren.

A synod had been established there for purposes

[1] Calamy's "Own Life," vol. ii. p. 377.

of truth and charity. Men of undoubted orthodoxy combined with a gentle loving spirit, had guided its proceedings; but now, whilst orthodoxy remained with most, the earlier concomitant temper had nearly disappeared. When the ministers assembled on one occasion, as the people waited at the door of the Meeting House, to hear the usual Lecture, it was agreed that each one should declare, in his own words, what he believed respecting the doctrine of the Trinity. Different expressions were employed--some distinct, some evasive; but at the close, the President pronounced the sense of the assembly to be, "That there is one living and true God, and that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God."

This did not allay the strife. It was continued with increasing zeal and activity, and booksellers' shops in the cathedral city exhibited pamphlet after pamphlet, in support of the new heresy.

Trinitarianism, or Arianism in various degrees, was maintained by excited disputants; and the West of England resembled somewhat the city of Constantinople in the days of Chrysostom and Gregory Nazianzen.

London next engaged in strife. Thomas Bradbury, a man of war in theology no less than in politics, espoused the side of the Exeter Trinitarians, and sought to pledge on their behalf the divines of the metropolis. A meeting was convened at Salters' Hall on the 19th of February, 1719. Calamy

would not go. Watts, the philosopher and poet, and Neal, the diligent historian, also absented themselves. Watts, perhaps, did so from a retiring disposition; and all three, it may be well believed, cherished a wise conviction, that amidst the strife of tongues and the darkening vapours of prejudice and passion, the dove-like truth of God,—the wisdom from above, pure and peaceable,—is not wont to light and rest on human hearts. But Bradbury there felt he was in his element. At last, after fierce debate, this disputant urged that all present should subscribe to the first Article of the Church of England on the Trinity, and also to the fifth and sixth answers of the Westminster Catechism. A crowd filled the little chapel of Salters' Hall. Ministers came in full force; and when the moment for decision arrived, amongst those who ascended the gallery to sign the roll, Bradbury stood conspicuous. Some below set up a hiss; "It is the serpent's voice," cried the pastor of Fetter Lane, "and it may be expected against a zeal for Him who is the woman's seed." A publication, I think, of the period, (it is long since I saw it, and I forget the title), gives a picture of the convention; the ground floor and the gallery are crowded by divines, and out of their mouths proceed labels full of party cries. Those who refused to sign were the learned and sober-minded Dr. Joshua Oldfield, of Maid Lane, Globe Alley, an eminent Presbyterian tutor, and others of the same

denomination, including the well-known Dr. Grosvenor, an eloquent preacher; Dr. Chandler, the Controversialist; and Dr. Lardner, the author of many learned works. They were joined by a few Baptists and Independents; but most of the latter denomination followed Thomas Bradbury.

The two divisions proceeded to offer the Exeter people "advices for peace." The non-subscribers' paper, of March the 10th, spoke soothingly and counselled moderation; but whilst denying sympathy with Arian doctrine, gave reasons for not signing the Trinitarian Confession. To do so, they said, wisely or not, would be taking side in a party question. It was unnecessary for the purpose of clearing their own orthodoxy, which had not been challenged. Such a declaration, under such circumstances, could never promote peace or truth; moreover, the subscription required went beyond that imposed by the Established Church. The subscribers' paper, of the 7th of April, was prefaced by their Declaration of Faith; and they recommended—that the advice of neighbouring ministers should be sought; that it was proper for a Church to require a declaration of the pastor's faith; and that where attempts at union failed, the different parties should quietly withdraw from each others' fellowship.

Unhappily, the Salters' Hall controversy resembled the Bangorian; like that, in the course of time, it gathered round it other questions; like that, it saw

pamphlets published in numbers one does not care to reckon; like that, its records deserve to remain on dusty shelves;[1] and like that, most unhappily, it degenerated into disgraceful personalities. Charges of falsehood, inconsistency, and cowardice were bandied about, and scandals outside the doctrinal dispute were swept within the "dimpling eddies of the whirlpool." The non-subscribers, on the whole, behaved more like gentlemen than did their opponents; but their antagonists, on account of their violently expressed orthodoxy, won the sympathy of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who wrote to Bradbury, telling him, "I am glad to see that amidst our other much lesser differences, we all stand fast and agree in contending for the faith as it was once delivered to the saints. I hope we may no less agree in a true Christian love and charity towards one another. God, in His good time, make us perfect by bringing us to the same communion also."[2]

After this storm had spent most, if not all its force, Dr. Calamy, in 1721, published some sermons preached in Salters' Hall at the lecture bearing its name; and, though he scrupled to join Bradbury in his subscription, he on this occasion went in the service of orthodoxy as far as Bradbury himself could have gone;

[1] Several of them may be found in Dr. Williams's Library. In Calamy's "Own Life," vol. ii., there are numerous allusions to the controversy.

[2] Wilson's "Dissenting Churches," vol. iii. p. 521.

for he added four more discourses, preached at the same lecture, containing a vindication of the text in the first epistle of John, the fifth chapter and the seventh verse. The publication was intended to promote the Trinitarian cause, and to set the Doctor right with all his brethren. Being a polite courtier, as well as a sound divine, he dedicated his book to the King, and paid him a questionable compliment, by comparing him to Charlemagne, the defender of the common faith, to whom Alcuin dedicated his treatise on the Trinity; and by implication the author paid himself a compliment too, by thus bringing one of the most learned names of the middle ages into connection with his own. Through Lord Townsend, he secured permission, not only to dedicate the volume, but also to present a copy of it to his Majesty. Whereupon he waited upon George I. "in his closet, between ten and eleven in the morning," and was highly gratified, when the King "graciously took it into his hands, and looked on it, and then was pleased to tell him he took the Dissenters for his hearty friends;" he naïvely desired him, "to let them know, that in the approaching election of members of Parliament, he depended on them to use their influence, wherever they had any interest, in favour of such as were hearty for him and his family."[1] The Presbyterian minister was immediately

[1] Calamy's "Own Life," vol. ii. p. 447.

informed by his lordship that he would presently hear something from his brother, Robert Walpole. A few days later, Calamy presented another copy of the book to "the three young princesses, who "stood in a row before him," and said, in answer to his kind expressions, "Sir, we hope these good prayers will be continued, for which we shall be very thankful." Then came an answer from the Treasury, with a bill of fifty pounds, for which was brought a receipt in form; the accepter of the gift signed the paper "with humble thanks." In his simplicity, no doubt he regarded it as a return for the book; but also, no doubt, the King and his minister had intentions beyond rewarding this man of learning and orthodoxy. To this incident in 1723 there followed a grant from the Royal Bounty of £500, "for the use and behalf of the poor widows of dissenting ministers." Afterwards £500 was, "upon application made on that behalf, ordered to be paid each half-year for the assisting either *ministers or their widows*." The matter had to be kept secret—a circumstance which, of course, cast an unpleasant suspicion over the whole business; and though the gift fell into the hands of honourable men, some people persisted in looking at it as a bribe to secure Dissenters' votes. Such is "the origin of the *Regium Donum*,[1] which continued year after

[1] See the whole story (with a defence) in Calamy's "Own Life," vol. ii. p. 472.

year to be handed over to certain leading Nonconformist ministers, who faithfully administered their trust, until the grant ceased in consequence of other grounds of objection than those which were at first started. Men of high integrity, and even of ultra Dissenting principles,[1] defended it to the last; but public opinion rose against them; and when all idea of bribery and corruption had vanished, the time-honoured offers of the Regium Donum distribution came to an end.

In 1722 Atterbury was still Bishop of Rochester and Dean of Westminster; but his fiery career then approached its end; nor was he longer to enjoy the society of Swift, Pope, and other literary celebrities within the precincts of his beloved Abbey. One August afternoon, whilst at the Deanery, after the Duke of Marlborough's funeral, he was, when sitting in his night gown, suddenly arrested, and conveyed in his own coach with great privacy, without any noise, "a prisoner to the Tower." Though the officers who seized him behaved with some respect, they searched for his papers, and threatened, if he did not speedily dress himself, they would take him away just as he was. On him, as a much-talked-of personage, loved by friends and hated by enemies, the Government, especially Walpole, had their eye, as too mischievous to be left at large. A Committee of the

[1] Dr. Pye Smith was one of them.

House of Commons investigated his case; and then charged him with treasonable correspondence to procure foreign troops for the restoration of the Stuarts. Some thought it the safest course to proceed against him, not in a criminal court before a jury, but in Parliament by a Bill of pains and penalties. After the Bill had been introduced in the House of Commons the accused chose to make his defence when it would reach the House of Lords. There his friend Lord Cowper delivered a speech in which he insisted, that if there was legal evidence against the Bishop, he ought to be legally convicted; that to vote him guilty of high treason, without citing witnesses, and without hearing him in his defence, was to make themselves both judges and accusers—in short, to act unjustly and unconstitutionally; and with some subtlety he proceeded to say, that by proceeding with the Bill and requiring the royal assent to it, they were invading their own privileges, and violating the rights of the Crown.[1] A party attack appeared in the cutting words, "I can guess at no advantage which the Church can derive from this Bill, except that it will cause a vacancy in the Deanery of Westminster and the See of Rochester." A sarcasm surpassed by one in Lord Bathurst's speech, "I can hardly account for the inveterate malice some per-

[1] See extract from speech and remarks in Campbell's "Lord Chancellors," vol. v. p. 336.

sons bear to the learned and ingenious Bishop of Rochester, unless they are possessed of the infatuation of the wild Indians, who fondly believe, they will inherit, not only the spirit, but even the abilities, of any great enemy they kill." Atterbury made an eloquent defence, asking indignantly, How could it be possible for him to foment a conspiracy, while no one living knew when, where, and with whom, it was carried on? That he always lived at home, and, when in the Deanery, never stirred out of one room. His way in life, he declared, had not led him to be conversant with conspirators and with treason. "I have sat in chapters," he said, "in Convocations, in Parliament, but in a counsel of war I never sat, much less was at the head of it." He solemnly affirmed, on the faith of a Christian, and as with the last gasp of his breath, that he never knew of any methods taken to procure an insurrection.[1] But the Bill against him passed by a majority of 83 to 43, and the Bishop received a condemnation to banishment.

The trial and its results have been much criticized. Macaulay and Stanhope conclude that there is satisfactory evidence of Atterbury's treasonable designs. The latter is satisfied that the letters produced, said to be written by the Bishop, and on which the charge mainly rested, were genuine; on the other hand, this

[1] See the whole speech in Atterbury's "Letters," vol. ii. pp. 105, 180. His declaration of innocence is on pp. 178, 179.

point is stoutly contested by a candid Church historian.[1] It appears to me, that though the genuineness of the letters be probable, it is not certain; and that the evidence of their genuineness would not now satisfy an English jury. Moreover, there can be no doubt that the whole proceeding was an impolitic party move; and, as Lord Stanhope observes, "it set aside those ordinary forms, and those precious safeguards, which the law of treason enjoins—a violence of which the danger is not felt, only because the precedent has, happily, not been followed."[2]

But Atterbury's complicity with plots under George's government to secure the restoration of the Stuarts, his sympathy with the rebellion, his correspondence with the Pretender, and his devotion to the Pretender's cause it is idle to deny; and these facts, read in connection with his asseverations of innocence, place his character in any but a favourable light. It is curious, after the lapse of so many years, that in 1864, a long closet in the Deanery was discovered behind the library fireplace, reached by a rude ladder, and capable of holding eight persons. Here, according to a vague tradition before the discovery, secret consultations of the kind alleged might have been held; and thus an answer is given to

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[1] Perry's "Ch. Hist.," vol. iii. Appendix.
[2] "Hist. of England," vol. ii. p. 49.

Atterbury's famous question, as to *where* it was possible for the conspirators to meet.[1]

After Atterbury's banishment, Walpole brought in a Bill to raise £10,000 a year by taxing the estates of Roman Catholics and Nonjurors. In the House of Lords the same nobleman who defended Atterbury appeared as the opponent of this persecuting measure. He implored their lordships to inquire whether by passing it they would not injure Protestantism—injure its credit, and injure its interests; for Protestants abroad might have to suffer for what was done by Protestants at home. He dwelt upon the disadvantages to a country, sure to follow such legislation; giving as an instance what happened to France through the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Fifty-five peers voted against a majority of sixty-nine; and Lord Cowper,—it proved the last act of his life,—entered his protest against the unrighteous Bill. Its impolicy was soon manifest. People, to escape the imposition of the tax, crowded to testify their allegiance, cursing the Government at the same time for the trouble it gave them; and Onslow, Speaker of the Commons, a calm looker-on, expressed his opinion, that "more real disaffection to the King and his family arose from it, than from anything which happened in that time."[2]

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[1] Stanley's "Memorials of Westminster Abbey," p. 458.

[2] Coxe's "Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole," vol. ii. p. 555.

CHAPTER V.

1702–1727.

THE more conspicuous prelates during the reigns of Queen Anne and George I. have come before us. But there are others who claim a passing notice.

Sharp, who, though a good man, seems in his latter days to have narrowed his sympathies, and confined them completely within the walls of the Establishment, had for his successor, Sir William Dawes, of whom some absurd stories are told which I do not care to repeat. It has been said that he "laid by the elegance of dress for an ecclesiastical habit with the greatest pleasure in the world, looking upon holy orders as the highest honour that could be conferred upon him."[1] It is difficult to estimate some of these dignitaries justly, for the most opposite descriptions are given of their character. John Robinson, for example, already mentioned, "a little brown man of a grave and venerable countenance," who succeeded Compton, is treated by

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[1] Noble's "Continuation of Granger," vol. ii. p. 78. See also Nichol's "Lit. Hist." vol. iv. p. 122.

Stackhouse with perfect contempt, as incompetent to sustain the episcopal office; but some one else describes him as charitable, good humoured, and strictly religious.

Of Philip Bisse, who attained the bishopric of St. David's in 1710, and proceeded to the See of Hereford in 1712, the chief acts recorded are, that he made the choir of the cathedral the neatest and most ornamental in the kingdom; that he rendered the parish churches of the city very beautiful and splendid; and that he devoted three thousand pounds to the repairs of the palace. He married the Dowager Duchess of Northumberland, who was attracted probably by the same qualities as promoted his advancement in other respects—for "this worthy divine was more indebted to his fine person than his fine preaching for preferment." [1]

Following other occupants of the bench in chronological order, we meet with a number of changes occurring in 1714, the year of the accession of George I. Hough was succeeded at Lichfield and Coventry by Edward Chandler, whose writings won for him a wide literary reputation, of which the prelates just named were totally destitute.[2] William Fleetwood, who wrote on coins and chronology, and translated Juri-en's "Plain Method of Christian Devotion,"—Queen

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[1] Noble, vol. ii. p. 99.

[2] Nichol's "Lit. Hist." vol. iv. pp. 269.

Anne called him, "My bishop,"—was transferred from St. Asaph to Ely the same year; and, strange to say, her Majesty could not prevent her last Parliament from condemning one of Fleetwood's publications to be burnt by the hangman. In the same year Willis was called to a bishop's throne in the cathedral of Gloucester, vacated by the liberal Edward Fowler; and George Smalridge proceeded to the diocese of Bristol, where he remained five years, and then died of apoplexy. A friend of Atterbury, and a High Churchman, he was nevertheless of such a pacific temper, that when he succeeded his pugnacious friend in his deaneries, he was said to carry a bucket to extinguish the flames kindled by his predecessor. Nor did this same changeful twelvemonth pass without another episcopal elevation in the person of Francis Gastrell, who obtained the diocese of Chester, having before written on the Doctrine of the Trinity and other theological subjects. The next year, 1715, saw John Potter, the celebrated Greek Archæologist, and Regius Professor of Divinity—destined at length to attain the Primacy—raised to the bench as Bishop of the University City, which he adorned by his erudition. Another eminent scholar and antiquary, who chose a different path of investigation, accepted a mitre in 1718; White Kennet succeeded the old philosopher, Richard Cumberland, at Peterborough, where the latter had been regarded as an incumbrance; and there were not wanting expectants of

promotion who longed to hear of his translation to a better world.[1]

Hoadley rose from Bangor to Hereford in 1721, and from Hereford to Salisbury in 1723. William Talbot, who made himself unpopular with the Dean and Chapter of Durham, to which see in 1722 he was translated, betrayed "a magnificent taste and temper, which, notwithstanding his large resources, often led him into difficulties." Such was his good fortune, that in nine years he disposed of all the best livings in his patronage, both the archdeaconries, and one-half the cathedral stalls. But rumour says, "he did not come to this opulent see without submitting to a douceur of six or seven thousand pounds."[2]

In the year 1723, Edmund Gibson, the ecclesiastical lawyer and historian of Synods, after presiding over the see of Lincoln for eight years, was removed to London; and the year afterwards, Launcelot Blackbourn, who had succeeded Blackhall at Exeter in 1716, attained the post of the northern Primacy. Blackbourn was succeeded at Exeter by Stephen Weston.

In turning to the clergy at large, I would remark that there were among them men who may be described as active "parish priests": rectors, vicars,

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[1] Nichol's "Lit. Hist." vol. iv. p. 80.
[2] Ibid. vol. i. p. 420.

and curates in small towns and still smaller villages, who attended to their duties with great conscientiousness, and went down to the grave in peace, leaving names to be inscribed with honour over their graves; or, what is better, to be enshrined in loving hearts. Memoirs of such men are not often written; and what might be their number we cannot tell.

Happily we can supply an example of this description.

There was a clergyman named John Bold; he served the curacy of Stoney Stanton, near Hinckley, his stipend being but thirty pounds a year, which, added to a salary of ten, received as schoolmaster during a portion of his life, made him just as rich as Goldsmith's parson. "Remote from polished and literary society, which he was calculated both to enjoy and adorn, he never cast any longing lingering looks behind, but girded up the loins of his mind for diligent service in his narrow sphere." Conscientious in the discharge of his duties on the Lord's day, and in connection with fasts and festivals, he was exemplary in visiting his parishioners and in holding catechetical meetings, so that an old man said: "I have often at the ringing of the bell on Saturday afternoon, left my plough for half an hour for instruction, and afterwards returned to it again." Out of his scanty pittance he saved ten pounds a year for charity; and with all his care and thrift "he had a great regard to the neatness of his person and the decorum of his dress." "He always wore a band and a large decent gown which folded over, and was bound by a sash: he exhibited no

variety of apparel to accommodate himself to different companies." [1]

There is no lack of sermons published throughout the thirty years now occupying our attention. They reflect the preaching of the day under its most favourable aspects. The episcopal bench numbered several distinguished preachers. Burnet maintained his popularity, whatever might be thought of his politics. Atterbury must have been a fascinating speaker, judging from his sermons, which are models of elegant composition. They contain singularly felicitous passages; for examples of which the reader is referred to a funeral sermon for Lady Cutts.[2] The less known Blackall, Bishop of Exeter, preached and published a long series of discourses upon our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, entering with great fulness of detail into several questions suggested in that most wonderful of homilies. He quoted Chrysostom so as to remind us of the expository teaching of the great orator, not as to style, but as to substantial method of treatment; for, from the pages of the English preacher we have reflected the state of contemporary society, not so vividly represented as by him of Constantinople, yet so as to place the habits of his audience in no very favourable light.

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[1] Memoir in Nichol's "Lit. Hist.," vol. v. p. 131.

[2] Atterbury's "Sermons," vol. i. p. 232.

Much of the preacher's exhortation is based on the *reasonableness* of the duties enjoined; yet references occur in the way of motive to the distinctive truths of the Gospel of Christ. Turning to Stanhope's sermons, preached upon several occasions, we find much more of "Evangelical" doctrine. They treat of the necessity and nature of regeneration, the conditions and privileges of the second birth, and the nature of the Christian's calling and election. His views are not Calvinistic, but they are in the main what would be called "Evangelical"; and though there are statements affirming baptismal regeneration, a reader differing from the author in that respect may peruse page after page with approval and edification.

Thomas Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, and Dean of Westminster, belongs to the reign of Anne, as well as to the reigns of her three predecessors. He did not die until 1713, when he left behind a fame for prose authorship, together with pulpit eloquence. His literary achievements surpassed his theological learning and ability. "He was indeed a great master of our language, and possessed at once the eloquence of the orator, the controversialist, and the historian."[1]

Nor should the name of the great scholar, Richard Bentley, Master of Trinity College, be omitted here; who, after delivering the Boyle Lecture under William III., lived after the coronation of George the

[1] Macaulay.

Second. He was a Professor of Divinity, and devoted himself to the critical revision of the Greek Testament text; and it remains as one of the traditions of Westminster Abbey, that in 1712, when the building, where the Cottonian treasures were kept, caught fire, he was seen in his dressing-gown carrying off under his arm the Alexandrian MS.

One hardly knows whether or not to reckon William Whiston amongst the Episcopalian clergy, as he acted like a Dissenter, and held "a solemn assembly for worship and the Eucharist" at his house in Cross Street, Hatton Garden, according to the form in his Liturgy, compiled after the Apostolical Constitutions;[1] but as he never formally left the Establishment, and was educated at the University of Cambridge, he may not inappropriately be noticed here as a man of extraordinary learning, and of simple, child-like piety. He lived to a very advanced age, and we shall meet with him hereafter at court, and elsewhere.

The age abounded in what were called "eminent divines." The appellation occurs continually in the notices of clergymen; and there is a characteristic style of eulogy adopted, of which the following is a fair example. Speaking of Dr. Henry Brydges, the writer says, "His demeanour was cheerful and humble, his manner sweet and unblamable, and his

[1] Whiston's "Memoirs," p. 236.

faith lively, firm, and orthodox; good-nature, compassion, generosity, and charity were visible in the whole course of his life and behaviour. He was a tender husband, an indulgent father, an affectionate brother, and a kind friend. He lived universally beloved, and died sincerely lamented."[1] Stereotyped expressions of this order are employed in numerous cases; in fact, the language of epitaphs, from which no precise idea of character can be gathered, because the language employed is covered all over with a haze of partiality.

Though the Puritan stamp of religious sentiment had been transferred from the Established Church to Nonconformist Communities, yet the spirit of earlier times could scarcely have evaporated altogether in the parsonages of England. There must have been a few clergymen in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, who had been educated at Oxford and Cambridge in Cromwell's day; and surely some of them, without being exactly disciples of the Commonwealth professors, would retain a tone of religious feeling caught from their Alma Mater when under Puritan rule.

Clerical activity in one department of literature arose out of the Deistical Controversy. Several books on the Deistical side, to use a common contemporary expression, made "a great noise." "The

[1] Nichol's "Literary Anecdotes," vol. i. p. 206.

Amyntor" (1698), by John Toland, which proceeded upon principles drawn from Spinoza,—though, according to a subsequent explanation, not designed as an attack on Christianity,—described the Canonical and Apocryphal Scriptures as having been originally on a level. The "Characteristics" of Lord Shaftesbury (1711), like the writings of Hobbes, assigned the determination of worship to the magistrate, attributed the Canon of Scripture to priestly artifice, stigmatized appeals to rewards and punishments as selfish, and insisted upon ridicule as a test of truth. The "Discourse of Free Thinking" (1713), and "The Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion" (1724), from the pen of Anthony Collins, whilst referring to the Gospel with respect, inveighed against the clergy; and made a specific attack on prophecy, saying, that the whole proof of Christianity rested on the predictions of the Old Testament, which he laboured to show were fanciful and unfulfilled. Woolston's "Discourses on the Saviour's Miracles" (1727–1729), though, strange to say, professedly in defence of Christianity, attacked the gospels as Gulliverian tales; and pronounced them allegorical, or deceptive, or capable of natural explanation. Dr. Tindal's "Christianity as Old as the Creation" (1730), took a different line from the rest, and dwelt upon natural religion and morality as evident from the beginning; and upon what is called Revelation as *unnecessary and impossible*, following Lord Herbert

in laying down fundamental principles sufficiently plain when read in the light of reason.

Answers to these books were issued in abundance. Samuel Clarke, Stephen Nye, and another clergyman, named Richardson, wrote learned answers to Toland, in vindication of the canonical writings; Dr. Wotton and John Balguy, father of the bishop of that name, replied to Lord Shaftesbury, taking up different parts of the "Characteristics;" Dr. Chandler, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, and Dr. Sykes, met the accusations and arguments of Collins; Bishop Gibson, Bishop Smallbrook, and Pearce, afterwards made Bishop of Rochester, besides three or four other clergymen, grappled with Woolston; and Conybeare, subsequently raised to the see of Bristol, examined and refuted the reasonings of Tindal. These authors are all included in the period before us; they all displayed great learning and industry and manifested ardent zeal in the defence of our religion. They pointed out the misrepresentations of their antagonists, unravelled their webs of sophistry, cleared up some difficulties they had discovered, and urged positive arguments in support of Scripture, chiefly of an historical kind. They spent much time and labour in exposing ignorance and prejudices on the side opposed to their own, which, after all, did not touch the core of the controversy; and one great defect in their methods of advocacy, is seen in failing to put clearly and in a convincing lustre the true difference

between what is called *natural* and what is called *revealed* religion. Even Conybeare, whose book on the whole is the best, does but lightly touch on the pardon of sin, as a blessing offered by the Gospel. The adaptation of the religion of Christ to the wants of humanity, its sins and its sorrows, its conflicts and its aspirations, seems to have been but dimly apprehended by these learned Divines. Certainly its crowning grace and power are inadequately displayed. Dr. Samuel Clarke—intellectually a much stronger man than any of the rest now named—not only replied to "The Amyntor," but, being the most distinguished English metaphysician of his day, published in his Boyle Lecture an abstract "Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God." His argument is by no means so original as some have supposed, since he is really found to have walked in the footsteps of Cudworth, More, and Howe. Hoadley eulogized the work as "one regular building erected upon an immovable foundation, and rising up from one stage to another, with equal strength and dignity;" but Whiston, after reading it, showed the ingenious author a nettle in the garden, remarking that "the weed contained better arguments for the Being and Attributes of God than all his metaphysics."

Doctrinal controversies were added to the Deistical. Whiston contended that Christ is a Divine Person, created or begotten by the Father before all ages;

that by Him He governs the world, but that He is inferior in nature and perfections; and that in the incarnation the Logos took the place of a human soul. Clarke, in his "Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity" (1712), laid down the principle that there is One supreme Cause and Original of things, and that with Him from the beginning was a second Person, not self-existing, but deriving His attributes from the Father. But he would not with the Arians affirm that "the Son was made out of nothing."[1] And Waterland, in his "Vindication of Christ's Divinity" (1719), and in other works, asserted and reasserted the Nicene faith against both Arians and Socinians.

A large number of inferior men followed in the wake of these great controversialists.

Owing to the writings of Whiston, Clarke, Waterland, and others, the doctrine of the Trinity was a topic especially attractive. Clergymen read what was published by their masters, and enlisted themselves under the flags of different regiments, using, with more or less skill, weapons provided by their leaders. Some were orthodox, some were heretical. They also talked on the subject at clerical meetings, and in the houses of parishioners, and failed not to discuss, with much or little learning, with much or little ability, the books on divinity poured out from the press.

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[1] Dr. Clarke's "Works," vol. iv.

The Militant Church fought out this and other questions as for its life; and while we read the writings of obscure polemics who shared in the encounter, we catch the war-cry of contending hosts, we hear the bray of brazen trumpets, and we witness the shock of internecine battle. In like manner, debates about Convocation and kindred topics, carried with them an immense amount of Church life, such as it was; passionate, proud, selfish, also conscientiously earnest; and honest partisans, who could not think of religion apart from the Church—and they were numerous—of course felt that momentous issues were at stake. A remarkable instance of self-denying zeal in connection with the Convocational struggle, is found in the biography of Samuel Wesley, who came up to London at great trouble and expense, and kept away from his family and his parish month after month, that he might at least give his vote on the side he espoused. And as we picture him walking through Westminster to Henry the Seventh's Chapel, and eagerly listening to debates led by Atterbury and Wake, perhaps joining in some of the Organ Room and Cloister struggles, what interest is involved in the remembrance that he had then at Epworth one son who was to be the greatest of all modern masters in the service of song; and a second, the founder of a Church, whose Conference would in religious influence outvie Convocation itself, even in the proctor's exaggerated estimate of its power. Besides all this,

it must be remembered that in the reigns of Queen Anne, and of the First George—especially during the excitement produced by the Rebellion of 1716—politics largely occupied the attention of the clergy. Everywhere the claims of the Pretender and the Hanoverian succession was a subject of interest; and the talk in clubs, coffee houses, and private parlours found an echo in the pulpit. Parishioners came together on Sundays, eager to catch, according to their own sympathies, notes of loyalty or whisperings of rebellion; and many on each side found ample gratification. It is said that psalms were sometimes selected with a political meaning, and that under the guidance of a Jacobite Rector a congregation might be heard singing with fervour :—

> "Confounded be those rebels all
> That to usurpers bow,
> And make what gods and kings they please,
> And worship them below."

Nor, while tongues were busy, were pens idle. Pamphlets followed sermons,—Tory and Whig clericals throwing themselves with the utmost ardour into the controversies waged by contending factions.

The reign of Queen Anne has been termed the Augustan age of literature. Its beauty, glory, and power were prolonged under the first Hanoverian king. It was impossible that the clergy, educated in the Universities, with leisure to read, and enjoying opportunities of intercourse with men of letters,

should escape the intellectual enthusiasm of the times. The number of literary men in the Church is almost surprising. Besides bishops, were other learned and thoughtful clergymen. Bentley, as we see, remained Master of Trinity, Cambridge, deep in classical studies as well as deep in disputes with the Fellows of his college. Strype, from 1709 to 1733, was hard at work upon his "Ecclesiastical Memorials" and "Annals of the Reformation." Norris did not finish his quiet career as a platonic philosopher until 1711. William Derham, who had caught the mantle of John Ray, went on, to the end of his life in 1735, plodding at his scientific studies in the Rectory of Upminster, of which we have results in his now almost forgotten "Physico-" and "Astro-Theology;" and Anthony Blackwell, master of Bosworth School in 1731, "finished," as he says himself, his once celebrated "Sacred Classics," "not without very great labour and pains, though accompanied with pleasures."

Other literary names, less known, belong to the same date. We meet with John Morton, Rector of Great Oxendon, author of "The Natural History of Northamptonshire," digging up fossils and writing letters on local antiquities;[1] Uvedale, Master of the Grammar School, Enfield, a botanist, collecting and examining plants, about which he carried on a

[1] Nichol's "Lit. Hist.," vol i. p. 324.

laborious correspondence;[1] William Smith, Rector of Melsonby, Yorkshire, a skilful antiquary, great in numismatics, a friend of Thoresby's, and author of "The Annals of University College;"[2] and Thomas Brett, of Springrove, extremely inquisitive respecting all manner of out-of-the-way matters.[3] In correspondence of theirs, snatched from destruction, one has a lively picture of employments going on in obscure parts of the country, such as the examination of Roman pottery, the deciphering of ancient inscriptions, the settlement of disputed dates, and determinations as to ancient and extinct offices.

Numerous clergymen of that day were mainly intent upon rising in the Church. Learned men hoped by their learning to win for themselves posts of emolument and honour; and men unlearned, but trusting to aristocratic connections, party zeal, and pleasant manners, were aiming at the same object. A bishop's throne, a good deanery, a rich prebend, a valuable rectory, were prizes which fired ambition; and when a see was vacant, or a good living fell in, immense flutterings of hope and fear followed in the breasts of time-servers. Addison, in the "Spectator," has his eye on characters of this sort when he divides the clergy into generals, field officers, and subalterns —the first including bishops, deans, and archdeacons;

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[1] Nichol's "Lit. Hist.," vol. iii. pp. 321 *et seq.*

[2] Ibid., vol. v. p. 485.

[3] Ibid., vol. iv. p. 103.

the second doctors of divinity, prebendaries, and "all that wear scarves." Competitors for the first class were numberless. In the second divisions several brevets were granted; "so that lute-string rose twopence a yard." Subalterns were innumerable; and if the clergy imitated the laity by splitting freeholds, they would "carry most of the elections in England." [1]

The seekers after preferment mostly frequented the higher walks of society; but besides these we must reckon a large number of clergymen who occupied the lower fields, and spent their time in idle ways. Their circumstances were miserable, and their habits in accordance with their circumstances; to them belonged the class pictured in darkest colours. Doubtless men were still to be found such as existed in the sixteenth century; but the social status of the profession in general, I believe, considerably improved in the course of the following age. On the whole, however, in spite of the popularity of the Church under Anne, in spite of its literary ornaments, in spite of members truly good numbered amongst its sons, the way in which clergymen at large were spoken of in periodicals is not respectful, and indicates no friendly sentiments towards them. Allusion is made to "An appendix to the Contempt of the Clergy," in which was to be

[1] "Spectator," vol. i. p. 118.

set forth the laziness of persons in holy orders, showing that "none of the present schisms could have crept into the flock but by the negligence of the pastors."[1] According to Burnet, who was not prejudiced in favour of his brethren of the lower clergy, their lives generally were not immoral; but they were not exemplary, not religious, in any deep meaning of that word, not zealous in their Divine Master's service, not seeking to save souls and glorify God.[2]

De Foe exposed a case of gross clerical immorality in the county of Yorkshire, and published a squib, in his own strange fashion, entitled "The Northern Worthies; or, a Visitation of the Yorkshire Clergy: a satire humbly dedicated to Parson Plaxton, the Reverend author of the 'Yorkshire Racers;' to be bought where it is sold, and to be sold where it is to be bought. Written for the edification of the Northern gentry and to cure them of the contagion of priest-craft. In five volumes, in folio, price £5 7*s.* 6*d.*, being a very voluminous work." It was intended to awaken the people, and especially the holders of Church patronage, to the propriety of decorum in their teachers; but the method adopted was scarcely likely to produce much beneficial effect. Perhaps the most infamous clergyman of the day was "Orator Henley."

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[1] "Tatler," vol. ii. p. 156.

[2] Southey's "Life of Wesley," vol. i. p. 201.

"Being admitted to priest's orders, he found the examination very short and superficial, and that it was not necessary to conform to the Christian religion in order either to deaconship or priesthood." "He thought it as lawful to take a licence from the King and Parliament at one place as another, at Hicks's Hall as at Doctors' Commons, so set up his oratory in Newport Market, Butcher Row. 'There,' says his friend, 'he had the assurance to form a plan which no mortal ever thought of; he had success against all opposition; challenged his adversaries to fair disputations and none would dispute with him; writ, read, and studied twelve hours a day; composed three dissertations a week on all subjects, undertook to teach in one year what Schools and Universities teach in five; was not terrified by menaces, insults, or satires, but still proceeded, matured his bold scheme, and put the Church and all that in danger.' After having stood some prosecutions he turned his rhetoric to buffoonery upon all public and private occurrences. All this passed in the same room, where sometimes he broke jests, and sometimes that bread which he called the *Primitive Eucharist.*"

> "Imbrown'd with native bronze, lo! Henley stands,
> Tuning his voice and balancing his hands;
> How fluent nonsense trickles from his tongue!
> How sweet the periods, neither said, nor sung!
> Still break the benches, Henley! with thy strain,
> While Sherlock, Hare, and Gibson preach in vain."[1]

The Ecclesiastical buildings of the age demand some notice. Amongst the muniments of Westminster Abbey brought to light by the "Royal

[1] Pope's "Dunciad," Book iii. p. 201, with note by Warburton.

Commission on Historical MSS." are several papers indicating repairs and additions at the commencement of the eighteenth century. Dr. Birch, subdean, the prebendaries, and Sir Christopher Wren were appointed in 1698 to carry out the works; the time-stained records referred to, enable us to see the scaffolds at that time raised outside the venerable edifice, and workmen climbing ladders, masons renewing stones, and the western towers rising under the superintendence of the great architect. St. Paul's Cathedral was completed after an expenditure of more than three-quarters of a million; and the architect,—whose removal from the office of Surveyor-General, separated him from the building which he raised, as well as the building which he altered,—retired to study and to contemplation, "cheerful in solitude, and well pleased to die in the shade as in the light." There is a touching story told by Horace Walpole, that the fabric which Wren raised in the metropolis "left such an impression on the mind of the good old man, that, being carried to see it once a year, it seemed to recall a memory which was almost deadened to every other use." [1]

Until of late years, deep galleries and coats of arms with "the lion and the unicorn fighting for the crown" continued in parish churches, giving a tolerably clear idea of what they were under Anne and

[1] Milman's "St. Paul's," p. 445.

her successor. There is a story that the high-backed enclosures on both sides of the aisles originated about that time, occasioned by complaints that the maids of honour and the gentlemen of the court, at Whitehall and elsewhere, spent their time in looking at one another, instead of attending to their religious duties. The dimensions of the pews as to width do not seem to have been diminished; and they retained that capaciousness which entitled them still to be styled "rooms" as they had been called before. Notices are preserved of the custom of men and women sitting apart at church; and it is curious to find in parish accounts an item of this kind, "Paid for sweeping the church and whipping the dogs, ten shillings."[1] We know that the burial of the dead in the aisles, and of the clergy in the chancel, was a common practice; and the statement often occurs, respecting a deceased incumbent, "He was buried under the communion table." In cathedrals, on a bishop's death, the throne was draped with black cloth; and according to the gossip of the hour, when the body of Bishop Kennet was going to be buried, his widow mounted a ladder, with her apron full of escutcheons, and pinned them upon the hearse herself.[2] In a letter written in 1726, by the Rev. Dr.

[1] "Report of Hist. MSS. Com.," vol. v. p. 571, Parish Documents of Hartland, N. Devon.

[2] Nichol's "Lit. Anecdotes," vol. ix. p. 319. Funerals often took place after dark. "It was so late at night when I preached, that

Tookie, of Chippenham, he says, describing adornments introduced into his parish church. "The desk before us, on which our cushions are laid, is covered with the old damask; the ladies' desks are covered with the scarlet serge; the vicar's desk with the blue curtain, which hangs down to hide their cupboards; and the desk for women in the seat before the vicar's, covered with the same blue." This clergyman, so busy with his upholstery, informs his correspondent, that a friend, prebendary of Ely, "liked the contrivance for kneeling in the ladies' seats," as "much more commodious than dirty stumbling-blocks of basses." The same writer speaks of the Litany desk being removed "out of the choir, as what raised vapours and gave offence to some of the gentlemen."[1]

Leaving these trifles—only worth noticing for a moment as picturesque details in connection with old churches,—we reach the important fact of a large addition being made to the number of ecclesiastical edifices built in London. Fifty new churches after the Great Fire had been by Act of Parliament ordered to be built, when, in the tenth year of Queen Anne, another Act was passed for the building of fifty more, to redress, as stated in a subsequent Com-

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I had no time to deliver all the matter which I had prepared." —Preface to sermon at the funeral of Lady Dorothy Norton, 1703, by Dr. Manningham, chaplain in ordinary to her Majesty.

[1] Nichol's "Lit. Hist.," vol. iv. p. 416.

mission, "the inconvenience and growing mischiefs which resulted from the increase of Dissenters and Popery." Sir Christopher Wren's churches are well known, and they well illustrate the ecclesiastical taste of the times. Many of the interiors are still admired, particularly that of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, with its cupola and columns. These interiors have been divided into three classes, the *domed*, such as that now mentioned; the *basilical*, that is with nave and side aisles; and the *miscellaneous*, including rectangular, single-aisled, and other plans. These churches are described as generally in the Roman style; but, with some Gothic exceptions, "none have the form of the Latin cross."[1] In connection with these church-building operations a circumstance may be mentioned, which, on account of its singularity, seems almost incredible. It is best to relate it in the words of one who approved of the scheme.

"That part of St. Martin's parish which is about Russell Court, besides the fulness of the church, was so remote, that, except they went to St. Clement's or Covent Garden, they scarce ever could have an opportunity of serving God in public. Upon Mr. Burgess leaving his Meeting House, Mr. Child with some of the inhabitants took it to make a Chapel of Ease. It was very old and incommodious, so that the repairing of it and fitting it up cost £600. This could not immediately be raised by the pew money,

[1] Clayton's "Plans, Elevations, etc., of Sir Christopher Wren's Churches," 1848.

or what was subscribed, therefore they went about for a voluntary collection from the inhabitants of the parish. The play-house occupying a part of the adjacent ground, Mr. Rich was applied to; but it being without the boundaries of the parish, they could not compel him, and as he was only one of the patentees he could not give out of the stock without the concurrence of the rest. The players were too poor to give, and might be too profane to regard Church work, so that there was no way but to give one day's acting."

Accordingly, Hamlet was acted at Drury Lane in June, 1706, with "an entertainment of dancing," the proceeds being devoted to the building fund.[1]

Turning to the Universities, we find that Jacobin sentiments prevailed at Oxford. The spirit of acquiescence in despotic rule, manifested by the famous decree of 1683, revived in the reign of Anne; if indeed it had ever drooped, except in feigned surrender, for a while when William occupied the throne. The heads of houses and other leading men threw their influence into the scale of Tory Church politics, and few of the gownsmen escaped the taint,[2] the effect of which upon the country at large may be easily conceived. The minority of Whig Churchmen lived for a time on civil terms with their contemporaries; but in 1715 a furious strife

[1] "Remarks on Review No. 74, concerning the New Chapel." 4to.—*Daily Courant*, June 18, 1706.

[2] Burnet's "Own Time," vol. ii. p. 380.

broke out between a Constitutional club, which met to drink health to King George and confusion to the Pretender James—and the Jacobite party, who watched the proceedings of the rest, and stirred up the riffraff of the city to make an assault upon them. "Down with the Whigs," "No George," "James for ever," were cries, resounding through the streets; and the mob attacked a Presbyterian meeting-house, and carried off the pulpit to be burnt. Such conduct, under the inspiration of University men, of course, damaged the reputation of the University itself; and we do not wonder to find that a design was entertained of vindicating it "from the odious and unjust charge of disloyalty to his Majesty King George."[1] What came of the design we do not know.

Architectural works were superintended in the College of Christ Church, during the reign of Anne, by Sir Christopher Wren, to whom it owes the renowned campanile, whose sonorous bell is so familiar to the ears of Oxford residents, and so eagerly listened to by Oxford visitors; and in 1714, Worcester College was founded on the site of Gloucester Hall, first built for the education of Greek Protestants; and until Keble College rose in our day, it was the last new foundation in the University on the

[1] A folio of seventy-six leaves to that effect is mentioned in the third Report of the "Hist. MSS. Com.," p. 194.

banks of the Isis. In those days the antiquary, John Hearne, was a distinguished notability, and filled the office of Architypographus and Beadle, a position, one might think, which would insure a quiet life; but, instead of that, the learned bibliopolist plunged into hot water with the Bodleian authorities; and the Vice-Chancellor, at a meeting in the Library, threatened twice, in a great passion, to send him to the Castle.[1] The quarrel originated in something which Hearne had written, if indeed the cause lay not deeper, in the fact of his Non-juring sentiments, and of his not having taken the oaths of office. Instead of being put to prison, he retired to Edmund Hall, and there privately carried on his studies, adorning by his erudition and researches a community with which, unfortunately, he could not live in peace. He was a type of a large class of students who united High Church opinion and feelings with an absorbing devotion to archæological pursuits; and nothing could be more felicitously descriptive of such a character, than the text inscribed on his grave-stone, "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee." College life then, was like college life since—with grave studies were mingled questions of trifling form and

[1] "Oxoniana," vol. iii. p. 59. The "Life of Thomas Hearne," p. 20.

ceremony; and it is amusing to light, as we do in the Oxford correspondence of 1721, upon a letter by Dr. Charlett on Deans of Colleges wearing Proctors' hoods, and the Public Librarian wearing the Proctor's gown.[1]

The Annals of Cambridge at that time are barren of interest. The chief records relate to loyal addresses presented to the Sovereign; a visit by Anne, when she was received with ceremonial displays akin to those at Oxford; a deputation sent to Frankfort on the Oder, to celebrate the Jubilee of the University there; the banishment of William Whiston for heresy; a theological disputation at the commencement of 1714; the bestowment by King George of Bishop Moore's books under the title of the Royal Library; questions in the King's Bench as to Dr. Bentley's title to the Regius Professorship of Divinity; new buildings on the western side of King's College Quadrangle; and a running fire of election contests and disputes between Gown and Town.[2]

The state of religion in this University was very low, if we may depend upon a letter written by a Norwich clergyman in 1727. "There is," he says, "such a general neglect in forming the minds of the youth aright, and so much poison daily thrown into those fountains of piety and learning, that no wonder if the

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[1] "Oxoniana," vol. iii. p. 161.

[2] Cooper's "Annals of Cambridge," vol. iv.

infection spreads, without the help of proper and effectual antidotes. It was a melancholy story of this kind which we had lately from Caius College; which, I am the more sorry for, because they were Norfolk lads that were concerned."[1] The writer, as he suspected himself, was too apt to look on the dark side of things; and he earnestly advocated the public censure of impious books by Convocation; yet there is no room to doubt that his fears were based on facts, and that habits of thought were fostered amongst the young men unfavourable to sound opinion and genuine piety.

A remarkable instance of Church activity in the way of popular education is found in the History of Cambridge; and it serves to illustrate the imperfect mode of proceeding adopted in those days. In 1703 the clergy of the town, and the heads of Houses, with other dignitaries combined to launch the undertaking. Subscriptions were obtained from the inhabitants, and so prosperous was the enterprise, that by Christmas, masters and mistresses were chosen for the education of 260 poor children—a number shortly increased to 300, who were divided into six schools, each having its own master or mistress; and it is interesting to notice how unknown then were our ideas of the monitorial system, and of the management of a large school by one presidential instructor.

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[1] Nichol's "Lit. Hist.," vol. iv. p. 415.

Six separate establishments were then deemed needful for three hundred boys and girls. The same kind of effort was made elsewhere; but soon the "religious difficulty" cropped up, and with it another difficulty, happily not familiar to us at the present time. These charity schools, though some of them were aided by Dissenters, were turned to purposes which Dissenters condemned, and which even some of the English Church dignitaries disapproved.

The Bishop of London noticed what he calls, "a heavy objection," that in many of the schools children were trained up in disaffection to the Government, and he said, "'tis a point that the Government is nearly concerned to look after, since it is to little purpose to subdue and conquer the present ill-humour, if a succession of disaffected persons is to be perpetually nursing up in our schools." But his lordship added afterwards, "there is not at the present the like grounds to complain of disaffection in our charity schools that there was some years ago;" yet he acknowledged, "that while the Protestant succession remained doubtful, and no stone was left unturned to defeat it, some persons who had their views a different way (*i.e.* Jacobites) endeavoured to get the management of these schools into their hands, and to make them instrumental in nourishing and spreading an aversion to the Protestant settlement." These passages throw light on the way in which clergymen were working; how much better they liked

the House of Stuart than the House of Hanover; and how they sought to get the education of the country into their hands, that they might, if possible, accomplish a counter Revolution. Another perversion of charity schools is noticed, namely, the use of them for poisoning the minds of children against Nonconformists, and for promoting High Church views. No attempt at separating between religious and secular education, no elementary schools, supported by Government, for the children of the poor in general, then existed. Education, in point of fact, took a denominational form; Church people aimed at making children Church people, like themselves; and Dissenters, in self-defence, had to establish schools of their own.[1]

In viewing the social religious life of the period, we shall first visit the court. Queen Anne was fond of going to church; and is said to have behaved herself with unusual decorum during worship. It was the custom for clergymen on entering the pulpit to bow to Royalty, and as Princess she had returned the courtesy; but William never did, even when a bishop preached. Whether the lady continued her former practice after she ascended the throne, does not appear: certainly she never neglected to notice the

[1] "An Essay towards the Encouragement of Charity Schools," by I. Watts, 1728. Works, 4to, vol. ii. p. 717. The extract from the Bishop of London's sermon is there given.

clergy in friendly ways. When popular preachers visited town, she commanded their services; and when King, Archbishop of Dublin, came on a visit to London, and had "customers enough from all parts to beg sermons; he preached before the Queen in her chapel, and to a great auditory at St. Margaret's Westminster."[1]

If we are to believe the story of the origin of high-backed pews, the behaviour of lords and ladies in the royal chapel could not have been very decorous;—ogling, whispering, and slumbering, must have been common, especially under preachers who had no distinguished gifts of oratory. Burnet and Sprat might rivet attention and reconcile even frivolous courtiers to sermons of more than an hour's length; but not many of the chaplains could vie with them. Political excitements, the rise and fall of ministries, Convocation questions, and "the-Church-in-danger" cry, might at times, in absence of worthier causes, rouse the listless auditor, and inspire some curiosity to learn on which side the preacher leaned. There are instances on record in which, under George I., court chaplains were dismissed, if, on stirring points, the trumpet gave an uncertain sound, or a note discordant with court harmonies. "We are told by Archdeacon Cobden, that Queen Anne paid such regard to her chaplains, that in public she heard them with

[1] "Hist. MSS. Com.," vol. ii. p. 234.

great attention, and in her private apartments always favoured them with her presence. In proof of which there goes this remarkable story: When she was confined with illness to her chamber, the ladies attending desired that prayers might be read in another room; Dr. Manningham, then in waiting, replied in his peculiar style, 'that he did not choose to whistle the prayers through a key-hole.' The answer was something jocular; but reason and decency justified his refusal. He was then admitted into the presence room, nor did this debar him from obtaining a mitre."[1]

George I. differed from his predecessor. Being a German, and not understanding English, educated as a Lutheran, and therefore not familiar with Church of England forms, he could not feel at home in services he was bound sometimes to attend. English sermons must have been unintelligible; and Morning and Evening Prayer tedious and unedifying. His life was not such as to manifest any deep sense of religion; but he favoured Whig bishops, and showed a kind disposition towards Protestant Dissenters.

Let us visit the City. The nave of new St. Paul's was never profaned like the nave of old St. Paul's. Burdens were not carried through it. Serjeants-at-law did not hold consultations with their clients under its arches; nor was it a regular promenade; but, in 1725, the Bishop of London noticed the

[1] Nichol's "Lit. Anecdotes," vol. i. p. 208.

custom of walking and talking in the nave, as, having become so common and scandalous, that he threatened to put in force the 18th Canon, and the Act of William and Mary, by which those guilty of irreverent behaviour were liable to be fined twenty pounds. The "Spectator,"—that looking-glass in which we behold reflected the manners of the times,—shows us how ladies went to church to display their charms, and ogled and stared at the congregation; how people repeated the responses in a tone of voice as loud as that of the minister, to the confusion of the whole service; how in a pew it was in the power of a coxcomb to utter what a woman could not avoid hearing; how some one seldom came till prayers were half over, then held the hat before his face for two or three moments, bowed to his acquaintance, sat down, took a pinch of snuff, and, at evening service perhaps, a nap; how, unlike Roman Catholics, and unlike Mohammedans, many people whispered and smiled, and winked and nodded, when they ought to have been absorbed in worship; and how gentlemen, when they heard what they did not like, would manifest dissatisfaction "with odd looks and gestures, and confer together in so loud and clamorous a manner, continued to the end of the discourse, and during the after-psalms, as was not to be silenced but by the bells."[1] Bad reading in those days, as in our

[1] "Spectator," Nos. 14, 53, 236, 242, 380, 503, 630.

own, was the subject of much public and private comment.

"You must know, sir," says Steele, in the "Spectator," "I have been a constant frequenter of the Service of the Church of England for above these four years last past, and until Sunday was seven night never discovered, to so great a degree, the excellency of the Common Prayer. When being at St. James's, Garlick Hill, church, I heard the Service read so distinctly, so emphatically, and so fervently, that it was next to an impossibility to be inattentive. My eyes and my thoughts could not wander as usual, but were confined to my prayers. I then considered I addressed myself to the Almighty, and not to a beautiful face; and when I reflected on my former performances of that duty I found I had run it over as a matter of form, in comparison to the manner in which I then discharged it. My mind was really affected, and fervent wishes accompanied my words."[1]

The maintenance of anything like ecclesiastical discipline in connection with the Establishment, had been felt more or less from the earliest period to be exceedingly difficult; indeed, beyond the exercise of it in a few glaring instances of immorality, it was completely impossible. It had been a puzzle under the Commonwealth, when an earnest attempt had been made to carry it out. It had been neglected after the Restoration; and under Queen Anne and George I., only occasional endeavours were made by clergymen

[1] "Spectator," No. 147. Aug. 18, 1711.

to secure purity of Communion. Whiston relates two cases, which came within his own knowledge, of improper characters being forbidden to approach the Lord's table ; [1] but they are mentioned as things quite out of the common way, and we are left to infer that amongst Church communicants there must have been considerable numbers of dissolute persons.

Parish clerks, according to the "Spectator," seem to have been a privileged class ; for they are caricatured—with grave countenances, short wigs, black clothes, mourning gloves, and hat bands,—meeting on certain days at taverns, and feasting upon "the florence and the pullets," "which they ought to send home to their own houses, and not pretend to live as well as the overseers of the poor." [2]

The charm of the two reigns is found in their literary associations; and those charms concentrate in London, the resort of authors and their friends. There were clubs at which the wits assembled, to discuss politics, to review the controversies of Convocation and the Church, to crack jokes, and to criticize new publications. Within the unimposing doorway of Button's Coffee House, on the south side of Russell Street, Covent Garden, might be seen Addison and Steele, Swift and Pope, with a host beside. There were the chief publishers' shops,—Jonson's, rather migratory in its character, pre-emi-

[1] Memoirs of Whiston, p. 182.

[2] No. 372. "Florence," a wine so called.

nent amongst them,—where theologians, poets, philosophers, and historians stepped in and gossipped with the renowned printer. By him were published the principal works, great and small, in every department of literature, which stimulated, if they did not satisfy, the mental cravings of the day. From his counter, too, issued from time to time the "Spectator," in a single leaf, and the "Tatler" and other periodicals, the appearance of which on the tea-table was anticipated with as much eagerness as "The Times," when we go down to breakfast. The literary world which thus centered in the metropolis ought to be noticed in connection with the Church, because so many distinguished men were identified with it; some of them, like Addison, being moral and religious instructors. It is said that papers in the "Spectator" were written by him as sermons when he thought of entering the Church; and it may be observed by the way, that Nonconformist divines as well as laymen contributed a number now and then to that popular periodical—Dr. Watts and Mr. Grove of Taunton being included in the number. If some of the writers adopted sceptical opinions, and wrote after a fashion unfavourable to religion and morality, it is to be remembered, they did not thereby forfeit, either in the eye of the law or in the judgment of their neighbours, a claim to be considered members of the National Church. Many of them went on Sunday to their parish places of worship,

from fashion or for amusement; and some of them probably contributed to the unbecoming scenes which "The Spectator" with delicate satire described and condemned.

In the western court suburb, two illustrious men resided—binary stars, the one scientific the other literary. Within a short distance of each other Sir Isaac Newton and Joseph Addison dwelt at Kensington—Newton occupying a house in Pitt's Buildings, Church Street—Addison residing in Holland House, the property of his wife, the Countess of Warwick. Newton was in declining health when he withdrew to that neighbourhood, and perhaps was not able to attend public worship; but Addison, a man of religious habits, must have often been seen in the parish church—then recently erected, and described by a visitor at the time as paved with Purbeck marble, the pewing and galleries neat and convenient, and the pulpit and chancel adorned with carving and painting.[1] Both were Churchmen, and both were interred in Westminster Abbey. In 1719, after lying in state within the Jerusalem Chamber, Addison was carried to the grave at dead of night, Atterbury preceding the corpse, as the procession by torchlight glided round the graves of the Plantagenets to the Albemarle vault in Henry the Seventh's Chapel; and in 1727 Newton followed

[1] Faulkner's "Kensington," p. 176.

his neighbour, the noblest in the realm counting it an honour to support his pall.

From the metropolis and its vicinity we pass to the provincial cities of England, and to the cloisters and closes of its cathedrals. There we find what may be emphatically termed the Church life of the age. Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" might be seen chained to a desk in the halls of palaces and deaneries. Goodly libraries, public and private, existed within those quiet retreats, and the dignitaries who dwelt within the precincts found ample time for study and devotion. There bishops retired when Parliament broke up. There students like Kennet carried on their researches, and men like Dawes enjoyed good living and good company. Devout spirits, such as Stanhope, attended daily Service; and popular preachers like Atterbury occupied the pulpit on Sundays. Pleasant was the life spent in these sheltered nooks. Few pictures are more grateful than the quaint-looking prebendal houses of that period, with trees and gardens round about, rooks cawing on winter mornings, and cathedral bells chiming on summer evenings in the ears of well-to-do dignitaries. Pity it was, that time and revenues largely at command were not husbanded for the benefit of immediate neighbourhoods lying in destitution and neglect.

The incomes of livings were very unequal—some were rich, and some were poor, many hundreds

under £20 to £30 a year. Curacies could scarcely rise above such rectories. No better guide can be found to what was interesting in the villages of that period than "The Spectator;" and by his help we can explore the church, survey its furniture, and become acquainted with the congregation. Parish politics were discussed in the churchyard after sermon, and before the bell rang. The walls of the church were decorated with texts of Scripture; there was a handsome pulpit cloth, and new railing round the Communion table, both provided at the generous Squire's expense. Everybody had a hassock given, as an encouragement to prayer; and an itinerant singing master guided the rustic choir. People napped under the sermon, practising ingenious devices to disguise the doze, and the singing often fell out of tune and out of time. Service ended, the Squire walked down from the seat in the chancel, between a double row of his tenants, that stood bowing to him on each side; and every now and then he inquired how such an one's wife, or mother, or son, or father did, whom he could not see at church. There were catechizings, and the boy that answered well had a Bible given him.[1]

Sweeping conclusions as to the state of society can give no satisfaction to any one who desires to bring judicial impartiality to bear on his inquiries. It is

[1] "The Spectator," No. 112.

common to draw from certain indisputable facts inferences of universal range. No century, perhaps, has been treated in this way more frequently than the eighteenth. The pages of "The Spectator" bear witness to the existence of immense folly; and no reader can fail to discern, beneath and beyond all that folly, a vast amount of vice, however varnished by ingenious fashions. Numbers of men and women in the upper circles, for whom Addison and others chiefly wrote, must have been deeply immoral. But *how far* the descriptions apply, it is difficult to decide. Pictures of the beautiful, as well as the base, are portrayed by these artists; and no doubt there were realities corresponding with the first class of descriptions as well as the second. On the whole, a painful, not a pleasant, impression is produced. Nor can we help feeling that, however well meant, the playful satire of the wits had little power to correct what was so skilfully exposed. Nor in the learned and moral discourses then commonly delivered in churches, was there much healing virtue. The novels of De Foe present stories of revolting sensuality for which, no doubt, there was a basis of fact; at the same time, we feel that the publication of such works by such an author, and the large circulation which they secured, reflects immense discredit on the public taste; also we must remember what has been so often said of the licentiousness of the stage during the same generation. Descending to the lower circles, we meet

with what is truly appalling; a bishop of that period speaks of them with homely force. The Lord's day had been turned into the devil's day; there was more lewdness, rude licentiousness, and drunkenness, and there were more quarrels and murders then than in all the week besides. The use of strong liquors had become an epidemic; brandy was killing people; and vice was rampant. Bad books met with a good market, and every sort of sin found ready vindicators, and hawkers also to circulate the vindication. The prelate's plain speaking manifests faithfulness; and even when we have made allowance for his declamatory style, there is no resisting the conviction that England must have been mournfully depraved, otherwise no one could have publicly witnessed against his own country in such terms of condemnation. It should be added, that statistics were furnished in an Appendix to this discourse, verifying the statements it contained.[1]

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[1] Sermon by the Bishop of Lichfield before the Society for the Reformation of Manners, 1729.

CHAPTER VI.

1702–1727.

THE Non-juror schism during these thirty years lengthened itself out in a series of changes clearly described by coupling them respectively with the names of those who headed the separatists. The first leader during this period was *Henry Dodwell*, who from the beginning had occupied a prominent part in the movement.[1] Though very decided in his views, and regarding secession from the Establishment as a duty, when the bishops who refused to take the oaths were succeeded by men of King William's appointment, he did not consider that there was any obligation to remain separate from the Episcopal Church of the land after the deprived prelates should have departed this life. At the very opening of the century he commenced preparations for healing the breach. In a publication entitled the "Case in View" he contemplated the near removal of the last non-juring Bishops; and as they dropped off one by one, he counselled his brethren to submit to the occupants of their former sees. Common sense dictated such a

[1] "Church of the Revolution," pp. 151, 380, 389.

course, but the manner in which the learned casuist sought to reconcile his advice with his opinions presents a striking example of ingenious yet sophistical argument; at the same time, his strenuous assertions of Church Independence were utterly incompatible with the position of the Establishment. Church Union and Church Independence were his favourite watchwords; and in private correspondence as well as in printed publications, he laboured to attain his end. In a correspondence dated 1702, which, during his residence at Shottesbrook, he carried on with the Bishop of Londonderry, he laid down the principle: "And we being satisfied, and fully persuaded that Christ did found and endow His Church with powers essential, inseparable, and sufficient to preserve her body, as distinct from and independent of any power on earth, in the exercise and discharge of that spiritual authority granted unto her by Christ our Lord; and though joined with Christian States and incorporated into one common body of subjects, yet not to be confounded with the State; as to the distinct nature of their powers, each independent on the other in their several spheres and commissions granted unto them by God."[1] To formulate expressions as he did was easy enough; but how to secure the application of principles so vague as his was quite another thing; still Dodwell persevered, and at last, when all the

[1] "Hist. MSS. Com.," vol. ii. p. 242.

surviving fathers of his community except one had disappeared, he took a decisive step and returned to the bosom of the Church of England. Frampton, Bishop of Gloucester, a moderate Non-juror, died in 1708; and Lloyd, a far different character, a firebrand rather than a strife-healer, left the world about the same time as his peaceable brother; only Ken remained, and he was living in seclusion, without taking any part in Non-juring affairs. The way was therefore open for Dodwell to do what he had for some time contemplated; and upon his reconciliation that of others followed. The pious Robert Nelson now quitted the secession ranks, satisfying himself, when attending his parish church, with a childish protest against the Revolutionary Settlement, by rising from his knees when the Queen's name occurred in the Service, or by sitting down upon his hassock.

The new leader who guided the fortunes of this declining cause was *George Hickes*,[1] before the Revolution, Dean of Worcester, he had been consecrated Bishop Suffragan with a privacy characteristic of the Non-jurors; and the secret did not become known until after the lapse of more than twenty years. If more unreasonable than Dodwell, he was more consistent,

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[1] "Church of Revolution," pp. 151, 188, 374, 383, 389. Hickes was consecrated in 1693; and Lathbury says, the first public intimation of the fact appears to have been given in a collection of papers published 1716.—"Hist. of Non-jurors," p. 263.

and, refusing to hearken to any pacific proposals, determined to carry on his ecclesiastical warfare.

During Hickes's administration the gentle spirit of Ken entered its rest. Nothing could be more beautiful than his life. His days at Longleat are amongst the treasured memories of one of England's fairest spots; and his last journeys derive a tender pathos from the singular fact of his carrying his shroud in his portmanteau,—he remarking that it "might be as soon wanted as any other of his habiliments." He put it on himself some days before the last; and in holy quietness and peace, his death was as beautiful as his life. Not less beautiful was his burial. He was buried at Frome Selwood—"the nearest parish within his own diocese" to the place where he died, as by his own request, "in the churchyard under the east window of the chancel, *just at sun rising*, without any manner of pomp or ceremony, besides that of the order for burial in the Liturgy of the Church of England; on the 21st day of March, 1710, anno ætat. 73.[1]" Burial at night was the fashion of that age: how much more appropriate was the funeral of this eminent Christian in the early morning!

Coincident with the leadership of Hickes, the following circumstance took place. Great noise arose in 1713 about a book on the hereditary right of the Crown, "generally thought to contain the utmost

[1] Hawkins' "Life of Ken," pp. 44, 45.

strength of the most learned of the Jacobite party." The object was to oppose the Hanoverian succession, and promote the cause of the Pretender; and, on the appearance of the book, the Government commenced proceedings against a Non-juring clergyman, named Hilkiah Bedford, charged with writing, printing, and publishing the volume. He was sentenced to pay a thousand marks, and to be imprisoned three years; and oddly enough, the man was ordered into court with a paper stuck on his hat stating his crime, and the judgment pronounced upon him. This order however, was countermanded. Bedford gave the printer the copy; but it is plain now that he was not the author. The performance is attributed, on sufficient grounds, to Dr. George Harbin, who was in communication with Bishop Atterbury. Bedford, with a strong dash of chivalry, submitted to trial and imprisonment, "from zeal to the cause, and affection for the real author." [1] Nor does he seem to

[1] Calamy's "Own Life," vol. ii. p. 268. To the Hist. MSS. Com. we are indebted for two letters by Bishop Atterbury, mentioning Mr. Bedford, the person who was imprisoned as the supposed author of the Jacobite book. "The doubt as to the authorship of that book has been quite set at rest by the recent discovery of the original manuscript, in the handwriting of Dr. George Harbin, to whom Atterbury's letters were addressed." Report V. p. ix. On page 319 occurs the following item:—"1720, Dec. 24th, Bromley T. Roffin (Atterbury) to Dr. Harbin, and six other letters of no importance." In another he says, "when you see Mr. Bedford." In another, "Mr. Bedford was with me yesterday."

have lost much by what he suffered, for he afterwards set up a school, which proved so prosperous that he earned a considerable fortune, being patronized, no doubt, by Non-jurors and Jacobites, who admired his self-sacrifice.

Hickes was not content without providing for the perpetuation of the separatist Church, and therefore it was arranged that Collier, Spinkes, and Hawes, three active members of the community, should be consecrated to the episcopal office. Soon after this the Non-juring patriarch died, in 1715, at the age of 74, leaving his bark, amidst the storms of this troublesome world, to be guided by the first of the new bishops.

Jeremiah Collier, who had absolved two Jacobites as they knelt in the cart before being fastened to the Tyburn gallows in 1694, now took up the main guidance of affairs, but certainly they did not prosper in his hands. He, with others, determined at all hazards to perpetuate the schism; and the rash conduct of the leaders involved their followers in immense difficulty. When the Rebellion broke out, in 1715, it could not but prove mischievous to the cause, for it proceeded upon a principle of hereditary succession, to which the Non-jurors were passionately attached; and though many of them had been peaceable men, and acted on the maxim of passive obedience, some took an active part in the support of the Pretender, and paid on the scaffold the conse-

quent penalty. The sympathy of many Non-jurors for the cause which brought to the block on Tower Hill the Earl of Derwentwater and Viscount Kenmure, was unmistakable and intense. Clerical influences in favour of the Rebellion were met by clerical efforts on the other side; the pulpit being employed for denunciations, founded on the words, "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft;" and also, for others of an opposite kind, based on the text, "Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee which frameth mischief by a law?" Political excitement in some cases led to disgraceful disturbances in Church; and Non-juring places of worship were riotously assailed. Those who frequented them wore as a token of admission a small black badge, recognizable only by the door-keeper, while public badges of adhesion to the Pretender were white roses, and for wearing them people were punished. On one occasion six-and-twenty Non-juring clergymen attended the funeral of one of their brethren; and after the execution of a young Jacobite, named Matthews, a large number gathered together at night around his grave. Besides these sympathetic demonstrations was another of a different character on the part of a Jacobite incumbent. The Rector of Whitechapel had an altar-piece of the Last Supper, with Bishop Kennet's face painted on it to represent Judas Iscariot, while St. John was recognized as resembling the Chevalier St. George.[1] This incumbent soon lost

his living. One James Shephard, a fanatical youth of eighteen, who wrote in a letter, "How meritorious an action will it be to free these nations from an usurpation they have laid under these nine-and-twenty years," was arrested in 1717, it appears, through information conveyed by a Non-juror; but he was attended at his execution by another, whom the miserable lad owned to be his father confessor, declaring that "he desired their prayers only who were of his own communion." Howell, ordained by Hickes, was cruelly sentenced to be whipped, fined, and imprisoned, for a publication entitled, "The Case of Schism in the Church of England Truly Stated;" a second person was convicted for keeping a Non-juring conventicle, where his Majesty's name was omitted in the prayers; a third was tried at the Wells assizes, and sentenced to the pillory and imprisonment, for seditious sermons; and a fourth had to stand at the bar on some inexplicable and absurd charge about making a collection in such a way as to invade the king's prerogative.[2] In all this, one is equally struck with intense folly on one side, and unrighteous severity on the other.

Union with the Eastern Church is a favourite project with High Churchmen disgusted with Rome,

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[1] Lathbury's "Hist. of Non-jurors," p. 256.

[2] These cases are found in Calamy's "Own Life," vol. ii. p. 390, and in Lathbury's "Hist.," p. 305. The last is beyond my comprehension.

yet craving for Unity. The Non-jurors took it up in good earnest in the year 1716, and the whole correspondence on the subject, with minute details of a proposed Concordat, has been preserved among Bishop Jolly's MSS. The particulars are much too complicated for these pages. The scheme ended, as all such schemes do, in the exchange of documents, and the expression of mutual regard, whilst "the correspondence furnishes evidence of the straitened circumstances of the Non-jurors, as well as of the suspicion and severity of the Government. They had not the means even of showing ordinary hospitality to the foreigners with whom they were in communication."[1] Soon after these efforts to

[1] Lathbury, p. 361. In the Second Report of the "Hist. MSS. Com.," p. 205, mention is made of "papers and letters relating to what passed between the Greek Church and the Catholic remnant of the British Churches, in order for a Concordat between them (1716)." In Lathbury's "Non-jurors," pp. 309–358, there are letters from those who call themselves "the suffering Catholic Bishops of the Old Constitution of Great Britain." The answers of "the Orthodox Church of the East" do not appear; but replies to the answers, and further correspondence on the part of the Non-jurors are given. According to Blackmore's "Doctrine of the Russian Church" (pref.), the letter from Constantinople required absolute submission, saying, "This is a sufficient answer to what you have written." The answer from Russia was more polite, and proposed that two delegates should be sent from England. The Conference was never held; and Archbishop Wake wrote to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, representing the Non-jurors as disloyal schismatics and pretenders. —Schaff's "Hist. of the Creeds of Christendom," p. 75.

unite with Orientals, the Non-jurors divided among themselves. As is natural in such circumstances, individual opinion came in conflict with theoretical unity; and in 1718 appears the spectacle of a division in the camp, under two leaders, Collier on the one side, Spinkes on the other. Both opposed the National Church; but Collier added to his rejection of the national oath the disuse of loyal prayers, that is to say, prayers for the reigning dynasty; and the maintenance of certain forms and ceremonies, denominated in the controversy by the word *usages;* whilst Spinkes adhered simply to the original basis of the separation, *i.e.*, the refusal of certain oaths and prayers. The "usages" related to the mixing of water with wine in the Lord's Supper; the commemoration of the faithful dead; a prayer of invocation; a form of oblation in the Eucharist; immersion in baptism; and the use of anointing oil.[1] These matters led to sore contention, and for a time there was a decided split amongst the Non-jurors. But Collier died in 1726, and Spinkes followed him in 1727; so the division, fostered chiefly by the energetic advocacy of each partisan, died out; and there for the present ends our notice of these controversies.

A few words may be added touching the character of Hickes, and two others connected with him. He is described as "low of stature, venerable of aspect,

[1] "Hist. MSS. Com.," vol. ii. p. 204.

and exalted in character," with no wealth, few enemies, and many friends, orthodox in faith, exemplary in life, happy in death; his patience great, his self-denial greater, his charity greatest of all,—this cardinal virtue not having been observed to fail "in a stage of nine-and-thirty years." He was a great friend of Robert Nelson, when Nelson was a Non-juror, and it appears that he acted as treasurer for such funds as were raised for the support of his suffering brethren.[1]

Two less-known persons were Fothergill and Blackbourne. Marmaduke Fothergill—a man of great learning, like Dodwell, in ecclesiastical antiquities—was eccentric in his habits. Somewhat corpulent, with hair white as wool, and with a ruddy complexion, he was so robust as not to feel the cold; and in the depth of winter he would jump out of bed and roll in the snow by way of hardening his constitution. He had no church, but he daily read the Church prayers in his family; and at his death left a library to the parish of Skipworth, where he had been clergyman; but as no building could be provided for books in that place, they were transferred to the cathedral of York.[2]

John Blackbourne, after resigning his preferment, laboured for a living as corrector of the press to Bowyer, the printer; and it is related that when

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[1] Nichol's "Anecdotes," vol. i. p. 124.
[2] Nichol's "Lit. Hist.," vol. iii. p. 373.

Burnet's History was put into his hands, and he found that the MS. had been tampered with, he persuaded his employer to decline the work altogether. He lived in Little Britain, lost to the world, and hidden amidst piles of books. It seems he had been in some mysterious way consecrated to the Episcopate, and he would give his blessing with all "the fervent zeal and devotion of a primitive bishop." He claimed to have no diocese, but exercised full episcopal power as a suffragan.[1]

In conclusion. Some of the Non-jurors excelled in learning, and of their conscientiousness there can be no doubt; but they were rash in judgment, and their conduct was in certain cases inconsistent with their theory. Their principle of separation became less worthy of respect in later than in earlier instances. Whilst William sat on the throne they had something to say at least plausible; but when James's daughter reigned, and when the original Non-juring bishops died, they had little or no ground left on which to stand. The *usages* were trifles to which men of a ritualistic temper attach unreasonable importance, whilst those who are penetrated with spiritual views of Christianity will set them down at their real value. It may be added that the movement altogether drained off from the Church almost all that it had retained of the old Anglo-Catholic element; and it

[1] "Lit. Anec.," vol. i. p. 252.

did not, in the course of time, attract to itself anything which recommended the cause, or any person who could increase its influence.

CHAPTER VII.

1702—1727.

A REVIEW of the state of Dissent during the first generation of the eighteenth century, may appropriately commence with notices of the leading ministers in London. A few worthies who had lived under the Stuarts still remained in harness. Daniel Burgess is a conspicuous name. Born during the civil wars—a Westminster boy in Busby's days, and a Commoner at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, at the Restoration—he entered the ministry in the reign of Charles II., "putting to sea," as he said, "in a storm, when very few Nonconformists did;" and was committed to gaol at Marlborough on some frivolous charge, common in those times of hardship. Coming to London, he preached at an Independent Meeting House in Brydges Street, Covent Garden; where, in the neighbourhood of the theatres, his singular mode of address attracted many of the actors, who made themselves merry at the expense of Dissenters. Daniel Burgess, proceeding on the maxim, 'That's the best key which best fits the lock and opens the door, though it be not a silver or golden key," indulged in a great many oddities—for which precedents may be found

in the sermons of good Bishop Latimer—and according to a common story, he once said, in coarse and offensive taste, yet not without a touch of truth—"If any of you would have a good and cheap suit, you will go to Monmouth Street; if you want a suit for life, you will go to the Court of Chancery; but if you wish for a suit which will last to eternity, you must go to the Lord Jesus Christ, and put on His robe of righteousness."[1]

After all, somebody who went to hear him on account of his eccentricities, returned remarking, "I never heard a better sermon in my life." Burgess died in 1713; exclaiming, as dark clouds lowered on Nonconformist prospects, "Well, if God has any more work for me, He can repair these decays, and will do it; and if not, blessed be God! I have a good home to go to, and this is a good time to go home."

At the same period Joseph Stennett, an eminent Baptist much younger than Burgess, occupied the pulpit of Pinners' Hall,—where he ministered to a congregation who believed in the observance of the seventh day, as binding upon Christians. Something of a poet, but more of a divine, he was also a promi-

[1] Bogue and Bennett's "History of Dissenters," vol. i. p. 482. There is a sermon on Daniel Burgess, by Matthew Henry full of high praise. "He knew," says the preacher very characteristically, "that they who are made fishers of men, have need to mind their business, both when they are fishing, and when they are mending their nets."

nent man of business, and presented an address to William III. on his escape from assassination. In the reign of Anne he continued his labours and then died, as did his neighbour Burgess, shortly before the accession of George I.

A name more widely known is that of Matthew Henry, who, after memorable service in the city of Chester, undertook, in the year 1712, a new pastorate in the rural parish of Hackney; where, very characteristically, he commenced his work by expounding the first chapter of Genesis in the morning, and the first chapter of Matthew in the afternoon; but he could not have proceeded far in these discourses when, in 1714, on a journey to his old friends, he stopped at the salt town of Nantwich—and there died, with the beautiful words on his lips, addressed to a friend, "You have been used to take notice of the sayings of dying men: this is mine—that a life spent in the service of God, and communion with Him, is the most pleasant life that any one can live in this world."

Dr. Williams—the distinguished Presbyterian who founded the useful library now in Grafton Street, where an admirable portrait of him may be seen—became,

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[1] There is a funeral sermon for Matthew Henry by John Reynolds, "preached at Nantwich, June 25, 1714, the day on which the sacred corpse was carried thence to be interred at Chester." There is another by Dr. Williams.

just as the Revolution commenced, a London minister at a Meeting House in Hand Alley, and afterwards at another in Petty France. An advocate for comprehension, he enjoyed the friendship of Baxter, Bates, and Howe—becoming more and more distinguished amongst the moderate Dissenters of his day, though exerting himself with intense zeal against the Occasional Conformity Bills. His courteous demeanour and his considerable wealth, gave him a large amount of influence, which he steadily exercised on the side of truth and charity; and, whatever may be thought of his works now, according to the judgment of contemporaries, he possessed "most vivid rays of genius" as well as "profound sagacity," and was "a lively, pungent, grave, copious, and indefatigable preacher."[1] He died in 1716.

Five years after, there followed him to the grave, in his 42nd year, an eminent member of the General Baptist denomination—Dr. John Gale, who had been educated at the University of Leyden, and at the age of nineteen had taken the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. He attained to literary renown, and enjoyed the friendship of Lord Chancellor King, Bishop Hoadley, and other distinguished persons. That which brought him most into public notice, was his work in reply to Wall's "History of Baptism." Extensive knowledge and sweetness of address "gave him easy access to

[1] Latin inscription on his grave-stone.

men of the greatest figure and worth, by conversing with whom, his own abilities were very much improved; and this advantage he constantly pursued. The large acquaintance he had with classic authors in both languages, and the progress he made in mathematical studies and in the most valuable parts of philosophy, were accompanied with a good degree of skill in the Oriental tongues." [1] He ministered to a congregation in Paul's Alley, of which he remained pastor to the time of his death, in 1721. It is melancholy to add, as an illustration of the straitened circumstances of some ministers unlike Dr. Williams, that Dr. Gale left a widow and several children, who had to seek a livelihood by keeping a coffee shop in Finch Lane.

Samuel Pomfret, driven away from London by persecution in the reign of Charles II., appears as pastor of a Church first meeting in Winchester Street and afterwards in Gravel Lane, Houndsditch. In the latter locality the place of worship, capable of containing 1500 people, was generally crowded. He once told a friend he had 800 communicants, and expected presently to receive 20 more. His temperament was excitable; and we need not wonder at his popularity, when we read of his almost seraphic fervour. He died in 1722.

In the same year departed Samuel Rosewell, pastor

[1] Funeral sermon, by Joseph Burroughs.

of the Presbyterian Church in Silver Street, of the same impassioned spiritual nature as his brother Pomfret. He could talk of Stuart times with vivid recollections and startling effect; for he had stood at the bar before Judge Jeffries, to answer an absurd charge of treason. Ordained in 1705, he succeeded John Howe, but removed in the latter years of his life to Hackney; there he was visited by Watts, who in a funeral sermon describes the interview—the preacher being in an elevated state of feeling, such as placed him in close fellowship with the subject of his hallowed reminiscences.

"Come, my friends," he exclaimed, "come into the chamber of a dying Christian; come, approach his pillow, and hear his holy language: 'I am going up to heaven, and I long to be gone—to be where my Saviour is. Why are His chariot wheels so long in coming? I hope I am a sincere Christian, but the meanest and the most unworthy. I know I am a great sinner, but did not Christ come to save the chief of sinners? I have trusted in Him, and I have strong consolation. I love God; I love Christ. I desire to love Him more, to be more like Him, and to serve Him in heaven without sin. Dear brother, I shall see you at the right hand of Christ. There I shall see our friends who are gone a little before (alluding to Sir T. Abney). I go to my God and to your God—to my Saviour, and to your Saviour.'"

William Tong, the biographer of Matthew Henry, minister of Salters' Hall, who died in 1727; and Dr. John Evans, who succeeded Dr. Williams, and died in

1730, deserve mention; but I hasten to notice more distinguished celebrities.

Edmund Calamy lived till 1732, and, from what we have already recorded, will be seen to have been in his day a guiding spirit amongst Presbyterians and Nonconformists in general. Nothing needs to be added, except to say that he became in 1703 pastor of a large congregation in Tothill Street, Westminster; after which a new Meeting House was erected for him in Long Ditch. "He had many persons of considerable figure in his congregation, and continued to preach there till his death, discharging the duties of the Christian Ministry with great constancy and diligence."[1]

A pastoral life of forty years ended in a solemn discourse from the words, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all"—a discourse in keeping with the spirit of the preacher's text, and of the preacher's life. His conspicuous position and courtly manners, brought him into contact with persons holding high office in Church and State. Sometimes with amusing frankness he relates his interviews with them, not attempting to conceal the gratification he experienced. He repeats the heads of a conversation which he and Mr. Benjamin Robinson held with

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[1] Wilson's "Dissenting Churches," vol. iv. p. 73. The erection of his new Meeting House, Calamy notices in his "Own Life."

Bishop Burnet, "at his lodgings in St. James's House," where he was encouraged "to some free discourse," by "his lordship's former civilities." The report of a subsequent conversation closes with the remark that "it might answer very good ends for some of us sometimes to wait on great men that would admit us to freedom of intercourse upon critical exigences." With the statesmen of the day he occasionally held conferences, as appears from his autobiography.[1]

Dr. Watts, from the year 1702 to the time of his death, was pastor of an Independent Church which, after the year 1708, met in Bury Street, St. Mary Axe. Philosopher, poet, theologian, his name is celebrated in three great walks of literature; and, with only a very slight drawback, he won the praise of Samuel Johnson. Though a decided Nonconformist, he was a man of charity and peace, delighting to associate with other denominations, wisely believing that such intercourse proves advantageous to all embraced within its circle. Among his friends he numbered bishops and statesmen; and, from literary taste, he delighted in the company of learned and able men.

Some of his days were sadly beclouded. At times his nervousness was very great, though stories of it told by anxious friends were much exaggerated. It appears, from the testimony of those who knew him best, that though dejected and absent, losing

[1] "Own Life," vol. i. p. 467.

interest in things once dear, enfeebled in action and unfitted for work, he never sank into a state of mental derangement. At a time when his faculties were in the utmost vigour, he indulged in certain speculations which deviated from the orthodox line, yet by no means so as to render his faith as a Christian at all questionable, or to give the slightest countenance to the report that he was labouring under an aberration of mind, and could not be held responsible for his opinions. He published in 1722 his "Christian Doctrine of the Trinity," simply asserting that there are Three Persons and one God, "in the plain evidence of Scripture," as he said, "without the aid or incumbrance of human schemes;" but in "Dissertations," in two parts, published soon afterwards, he broached a theory to the effect, that Christ's human soul was the first of all creatures, formed before the foundation of the world, and immediately united to the Divine nature: that it is superior to angels, the firstborn of every creature, and possessed of such powers as, by virtue of the indwelling Godhead, might be some way employed in the great and wondrous transactions of Creation and Providence. This idea he propounded for the purpose of meeting Arian objections to orthodox opinions, on the ground that they involve the assertion of change in an Infinite and therefore Unchangeable Nature. According to Watts's hypothesis, the change implied in the humiliation of the Son of God pertained to His human, not His Divine

nature. He further believed that the sentiments of ancient Jews and Christians favoured the notion of a twofold Logos, or, of the Word of God having a double nature, human as well as Divine, before the Incarnation.[1]

Watts's mind was of the speculative order, and in other fields he allowed himself to expatiate. As a Dissenter, he of course objected to the existing Establishment; but he was far from apprehending those principles which lie at the basis of modern Voluntaryism; and as political theories and abstract conceptions of government floated in men's minds, and had a great charm for the reading public, he caught the spirit of the times; and, musing in Lady Abney's gardens at Theobalds and Newington, he sketched a Utopian and impracticable state of society in "A New Essay on Civil Power in Things Sacred." He considered it to be the duty of rulers to promote the interests of religion in a general way—to inculcate moral duties upon the people at large, and to institute devotional services in connexion with national mercies and calamities; but, he said, no *particular* form of religion ought to be established and paid for out of the exchequer of the State. That, he thought, should be left free for individuals to choose, according to their own convictions; "the phantom of a universal conscience given to the Government" being by him

[1] "Dissertations," vol. ii. p. 109.

pronounced "a sorry pretence and big with absurdities." He maintained, all that particular Christian Churches can claim is protection against disturbance by "men of violence or harlequins and scaramouches," or by other intruders; and all exclusion of the members of such Churches from civil offices he declared to be thoroughly unjust.

He remarked that advantages may accrue to the State, and also to the Church, by a certain connection between them, without any such alliance as some supposed necessary; but advances of this sort on either side, he urged, should be carefully guarded, as the Church is in danger of losing its humility, and the State its freedom, by such complications.

The books in which these theological and ecclesiastical views are embalmed, secure now but few readers; and the metaphysical disquisitions of the same author are seldom taken down from the library shelf; but the name of Watts is deeply engraven on the history of our literature, and finds a cherished place in the memories of Christian Englishmen: his "Divine Songs" were familiar to us in our nursery, and psalms and hymns, written by him, are sung in every Protestant Church within the British dominions and the United States. These compositions are vastly superior to anything of the kind previously existing in the English language. Sternhold and Hopkins' version of the psalms had nothing to recommend it except a quaintly literal rendering of the original.

Tate and Brady forfeited much of that advantage without offering any new recommendation. Watts, really a poet, was the first to express the spirit of the psalter in harmonious verse, and in application to New Testament times, in this respect surpassing Milton; whilst his hymns, though many of them are imperfect, present specimens of admirable versification, and of the most impassioned devotional sentiment.

Watts survived the period embraced within this division of our history; but as the latter part of his life was spent in retirement, we may here anticipate his closing days. Some of his relations assailed his character, a circumstance which, as it never touched his reputation, because the assaults were malicious, may be left in oblivion; but his depression towards the end was so intense as greatly to pain his numerous friends.

"When he was almost worn out by his infirmities, he observed, in conversation with a friend, that he remembered an aged minister used to say that the most learned and knowing Christians, when they come to die, have only the same plain promises of the Gospel for their support as the common and unlearned; 'and so,' said he, 'I find it. It is the plain promises, that do not require much labour and pains to understand them; for I can do nothing now but look into my Bible for some promise to support me, and live upon that.' He discoursed much of his dependence upon the atoning sacrifice of Christ; and his trust in God, through the Mediator, remained unshaken to the last.

'I should be glad,' he said, 'to read more, yet not in order to be confirmed more in the truth of the Christian religion, or in the truth of its promises; for I believe them enough to venture an eternity on them.'"

He died in December, 1748, and was buried in Bunhill Fields, his funeral being attended, at his own desire, by two Independents, two Presbyterians, and two Baptists.

William Whiston, in one of his gossiping moods, introduces us, in connection with the name of Watts, to two ministers near London,—the one affording an instance of deviation from orthodoxy, the other interesting on account of his ancestry and associations.

"About the year 1720 it was, that I walked to Brentwood in Essex, where I found my excellent and pious friend and fellow-sufferer for religion, Martin Tomkins, who had been lately expelled by his Dissenting congregation at Newington, on suspicion of the Arian heresy, as I had been from Cambridge long before. He was the author of that remarkable and good-natured appeal to a Turk or an Indian, about the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity, which greatly moved good Dr. Watts, who had before written for it; and the late edition of which has, I believe, entirely cooled Dr. Watts and all his friends' zeal in that controversy. My friend lodged with Mr. Barber, the then Dissenting minister at Brentwood, who invited him sometimes to preach for him there. The reason of my introducing Mr. Barber into these memoirs is this: one of Mr. Barber's ancestors in the days of bloody Queen Mary, was become a Protestant, and was condemned to be burnt in Smithfield; the faggots were

accordingly laid about the stake to which poor Mr. Barber was tied, and were about to be set on fire, when the news came that Queen Mary was dead, upon which all knew that her sister Elizabeth was to succeed. This took away all power of such officers as were to see the execution, and saved Mr. Barber. In memory of which most providential delivery, Mr. Barber had a picture of Queen Elizabeth that saved him, made with ornaments about it; and as he said, 'he hoped Almighty God would accept of this his will for the deed, and allow him to be a martyr for religion.' So he ordered by his will that the same image should be transmitted down in the elder branch of his family, for a memorial to all generations, and there it is preserved to this day." Whiston adds that in his opinion it was "a nobler monument to the honour of that family than any monument of the military achievements of Alexander the Great, or Julius Cæsar, or the like murderers of men could be theirs." [1]

Next may be mentioned two literary Nonconformists, to whom fame has done scant justice. Simon Browne, minister for a while in the Old Jewry, where he had crowded congregations, retired from public life, heart-broken with domestic bereavement, and sunk into a strange state of delusion, believing that his soul was annihilated, and that he had become utterly divested of consciousness. It was while in such a mysterious state that he wrote a reply to both Woolston and Tindal; and it is remarked, "if he was crazy, he was at least more than equal to two infidels." [2] It is to his credit that he repudiated all

[1] Whiston's "Memoirs," p. 294. [2] Allibone's "Dictionary."

aid from the magistrate in this controversy, for in his preface of a "Fit Rebuke to a Ludicrous Infidel" (1732), he asserts the fullest liberty of conscience, and condemns civil prosecutions in matters of religious opinion. Jeremiah Jones, minister of a Dissenting congregation in Gloucestershire is to be ranked with Browne amongst the able literary defenders of Christianity; for he wrote, first, "A Vindication of the Gospel of St. Matthew" (1719) from Whiston's charge of dislocation, maintaining that our present Greek copies of it are in the same order in which they were originally written; and secondly, "A New and Full Method of Settling the Canonical Authority of the New Testament," in which he gives large translations from the apocryphal gospels, proving the immense superiority of those which are canonical. The book is one of distinguished research, far surpassing any English publication, on the subject before; whilst breaking ground in a new department of critical inquiry, it retains its place still as a principal authority, awaiting the labours of modern scholars in a field of research where much work remains to be done. Jeremiah Jones had studied under Samuel Jones of Tewkesbury and of Gloucester, and had then sat in the same class-room with Butler and Secker, destined to wear mitres, and with Samuel Chandler, whom we shall see before long attaining to eminence in the ranks of Nonconformity. In Biblical scholarship, perhaps, Jeremiah Jones equalled any one of these fellow-students; and after a short minis-

try at Nailsworth, in Gloucestershire, he died in 1724, aged only thirty-one. The good man sleeps amidst the charming Cotswold scenery, in a burial ground called Forest Green—a cleared space in the heart of ancient woods, where Nonconformists in days of persecution had been wont to meet for Divine worship.

Passing from Nonconformist preachers to Nonconformist preaching, it is obvious that no general remarks will apply to the varieties which that preaching presents. A distinction must be made between its substance and its form. As to its substance, it has been said, that a great change began to take place in it, inasmuch as preachers came more and more to see that Christianity rests on moral, rather than supernatural grounds, and that this committed them to new paths of thought, which led eventually to latitudinarian views. Where this habit existed by itself, it tended in the long run to a great theological revolution—in short, to produce results distressing to those who walked in the old orthodox ways. But it is forgotten, that some who did place Christianity on a moral foundation rather than any other, also held so firmly to the authority of Scripture, and continued to interpret it so much in the old Puritan spirit, that they really diverged very little from what is understood by Evangelical teaching. One principle in their minds so modified the operation of another, that what some would deem the necessary logical results, did not follow in actual life. Besides, it is to

be recollected that many continued to rest Christianity upon the old foundation, and closely to walk in the footsteps of their predecessors. There was no difference at all between the earlier and many of the later Nonconformists on this point. The theology of Bradbury—and he represents a large class—was all but identical with that of Owen and Goodwin.

Then as to the form of preaching—however unlike, in the case of men of large culture, it might be, in style, arrangement, and expression, to the models of the former century; though there were fewer divisions, and less of precise dogmatism, and more of polish in the style of expression; still there may be found in the sermons of Calamy and Watts, who may be taken as representatives of the widest Nonconformist learning at that period, some considerable formality in the distribution of topics, combined with a tone in lessons and appeals, and a closeness of personal application to the conscience, quite after the manner of Richard Baxter and John Howe. Much of the fire and force of a previous age was lost; but a good deal of that *unction* which gave a charm to the best preachers of the Commonwealth still remained. And it ought particularly to be stated, that whatever speculations might be entertained as to the nature of Christ, and His relation to the Father, Dissenters generally continued to insist upon His gracious mediation and redemptive work. They set forth *Him*, as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

It is to be noticed, that whatever of Arianism or of Unitarianism there might be in the West, few if any of the ministers assembled at Salters' Hall were in sympathy with such opinions. A large minority subscribed to the orthodox confession; and those who did not adopt that course alleged as a reason, that their orthodoxy had not been called in question by anybody.

Proceeding to notice Nonconformist places of worship and their congregations, we may remark that, even after the Toleration Act had passed, so little confidence was felt in the permanent security of their liberties, that congregations slowly emerged from barns and cottages, to rear for themselves appropriate structures; and when they did so, under William and Anne—and the remark applies to the whole period under review—the name they gave to what they built is very significant. The present age of ecclesiastical architecture was then lying in remote distance; and few, if any, English Presbyterians, Independents, or Baptists would have thought of choosing the name *church* for the structure in which they assembled, since that, in their estimation, would confound the spiritual with the material, the people with the place. And as to the word *chapel*, so universal some years ago, our fathers, except in cases of historical association, rarely used the term; perhaps to them it savoured of Prelacy and Popery. *Meeting*, or *Meeting-house*, was the orthodox designation.

In the Metropolis, and throughout the country, as in the Establishment, so within the borders of Dissent, the reigns of Anne and the First George saw extensive building operations going on for religious purposes. To take a few instances. A new meeting-house was built for Dr. Watts, in St. Mary Axe, a district which had even then lost the noble associations woven around it in earlier days by the contiguity of Duke's Place, where the House of Norfolk dwelt, in almost regal splendour, under Queen Elizabeth. The cost was £700; and, according to the contract, the dimensions were forty feet in front, and fifty in depth. It stood on leasehold ground, for which a rent of £20 a year was paid. The Bishop of London granted a licence dated October 6, 1708.

A plan of the building was drawn for the information of persons to whom seats were allotted; and the subscription list is still preserved. Amongst other documents connected with the Trust, this memorandum appears: "That the use of one or more places in a particular seat is assigned to them for their conveniency in public worship during their personal attendance there; and if they die or absent themselves above six months, their interest therein is to be void and fall into the hands of the Trustees."

Lancashire had been a land of Goshen for the Presbyterians; and in it they remained a numerous body, throughout the age of persecution. When that ceased, they left their concealment, and began

to build places of worship in the best situations they could find. In Manchester itself, "a great and fair meeting-house" had been opened in 1704, amidst "the curses and reproaches" of the Jacobite populace. In the neighbourhood we meet with stone-masons, bricklayers, and carpenters busy in carrying out specifications laid down by Nonconformist committees. Copious details remain of what was done in erecting the meeting-house at Birch, about the beginning of the last century, after a former "chapel" had been restored to the Fellows and Wardens of the Collegiate Church. The new building must have been a humble one, as it cost under £100; and it is curious to discover that for "the pulpitt quishion," as it is called, was paid the disproportionate sum of £1 3*s.* 3*d.* Still more curious is it to read the description of the property, in the conveyance deed, as the said "edifice, *chapel*, oratory, and meeting-place," one epithet, no doubt, being borrowed from the Birch Chapel, which the good folks had just left. The Trust deed required that the pulpit should be occupied by "a Protestant able minister, who is of the Presbyterian judgment and practice, as to Church discipline and government, and not of any other persuasion; that he should be orthodox and sound in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and hold and profess the doctrinal Articles of the Church of England." Sittings were appropriated to the family of the Worsleys and their servants. Near Blackburn a meeting-house was built in 1710,

where two pews were appropriated to the Houghton family with their servants. In the same year a commodious place of worship was erected at St. Helens. As to Liverpool, a town which only began to appear on the map of England about the middle of the seventeenth century, we read of "the house of Mr. Daniel Fabiens, practizer in physic," being licensed at the Quarter Sessions, July 25, 1700, for the use of the Baptists; and of a meeting-house in Kaye Street, 1710, for the use of the Presbyterians.

The annals of the Congregational Church at Cockermouth are copious, and attracted the attention of Robert Southey. In them there are formally specified reasons, dated 1718, for arising to build :—

"We hope," say the people, "that this is God's time for this great and good undertaking: for our congregation is numerous, and we may fear that those who may follow us may not prove more able or more willing than several of us are. For the Lord has made many that are able, so willing that they strengthen one another's hand as those in Nehemiah, saying, 'Let us rise up and build' (Neh. ii. 18)." A list of the contributors is appended.[1]

Leaving other instances in that part of England, we proceed to Yorkshire, the favoured region of "Old Dissent." There "Morley Chapel," once included within the Establishment, remained in Nonconformist

[1] "Hist. of the Congregational Church, Cockermouth," p. 124.

hands; and in 1691, at Leeds, the congregation in Call Lane constructed what is described as "a stately chapel or meeting-house, with a turret on the leaded roof." In 1718, a new edifice appears in the town of Bradford, at the cost of £340, of which the furniture had been brought from the dismantled chambers of Howley Hall.

Hastening to the Eastern Counties, we meet, in the heart of the ancient city of Norwich, with a place of worship remaining much as it was when opened,—the fairest specimen in existence of the buildings of that day,—with dark oak gallery and pulpit, columns supporting the roof, and monuments and hatchments, several of early date, adorning the walls.

In the "Annals of Coggeshall,"—a town where John Owen had preached as Incumbent of the parish in Cromwell's time,—notice is taken of two tenements, and a croft, being purchased in 1710, as the site of a building, forty-five feet long, and thirty-six feet wide, and a vestry twelve feet square, There, in 1716, met seven hundred hearers, forty-three having votes for the county, nineteen of the number being described as gentlemen.

The result, as to architectural appearance, of these building enterprises in general, may be thus roughly described. Externally there was nothing to attract. Norwich "Old Meeting," indeed, in the midst of its spacious burial-ground, with an extended red façade, if we may use that word, divided by lofty pilasters, had

a pleasant aspect, of a somewhat solemn kind; but commonly an "old meeting-house" was not worthy of comparison with this East Anglian one, though meeting-houses at Yarmouth and Stepney, now swept away, were of the same general type. There is a sun-dial at Norwich, near the top of the building; and in some instances, verses used to be introduced, as at Blackley,—

> "My charge is sure, it may be soon,
> Each hastening minute leads me on;
> The awful summons draweth nigh,
> And every day I live, I die."

The interior of such buildings was more characteristic. On entering, your attention was attracted by the pulpit—either a good large platform, enclosed by wainscot sides, with a curved projection in front, supporting a book-board, or a deep narrow box, such as, until of late, was common in country churches, surmounted by a heavy sounding-board. Occasionally, above this huge piece of furniture might be espied a little dove with an olive-branch in its mouth—the only emblem allowed in the Puritan edifice. On the back board, above the preacher, there was sometimes a nail, or peg, on which to hang a clerical hat, perhaps, after a funeral, draped with a long silk band. Occasionally, a desk for the precentor, or clerk, stood under the pulpit; and in front was almost always placed a table pew, as it was called—namely, a large square or oblong enclosure, containing a seat running

all round, with the Communion Table in the middle. In short, it was to the meeting-house, what an altar is at church; only, from it all sacerdotal ideas were kept at an immense distance. On "the table" there would often be a Bible—less frequently "Foxe's Book of Martyrs," or a folio volume of sermons; a provision not dissimilar to the old practice of chaining the Scriptures, or the Martyrology, to some conspicuous part of a church. The poor generally occupied the surrounding benches; and at the administration of the Lord's Supper, they removed to give place to the deacons and to the pastor, who presided on the solemn occasion. No font could be found within the four blank and dimly-lighted walls; a basin, in some instances carried up to the side of the pulpit, where a ring had been fixed to receive it, served for the purpose of holy baptism. The principal pews were spacious, like parlours; and those appropriated to rich men resembled such as are appropriated in a country church to the squire of the parish. They were lined with green baize, and were often concealed behind thick curtains—whilst on the door, in a few distinguished instances, was carved either a monogram or a family crest. Two or three large brass chandeliers were in numerous cases suspended from the ceiling by a chain; and with their few candles they gave, in the late hour of a winter's afternoon, just light enough to make darkness visible. Evening services at that period were unusual, save on some

very special occasion. In the front gallery, or in the table pew, to the exclusion of the poor, there would be singing men and singing women, to lead the psalmody; and by no means in all cases did they stand when engaged in the service of song. The practice of dividing the congregation according to sex is a custom which lingered in country meeting-houses within my own remembrance — a practice now introduced into High Churches according to primitive custom.

The congregations occupying these edifices were for the most part poor; yet a few aristocratic families, who had been Presbyterians or Independents during the Commonwealth, preserved their ancestral faith. Amongst the members at Bury Street are the names of Lady Abney—Dr. Watts's friend, and the equally well known Sir John Hartopp, and the eccentric granddaughter of Oliver Cromwell, Mrs. Bridget Bendish, of whom many curious stories are told, and who is said to have greatly resembled her illustrious ancestor. The name of Ashurst also appears on the Church list; but what is a little strange, no distinguished name except Sir John Hartopp's is found on the original list of subscribers to the new building, and he gave £20—the largest donation of any except one of £30 by a Mr. Punkard, perhaps a City merchant.[1]

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[1] The foregoing notices are drawn from personal observation, local traditions, and topographical volumes, "The History of the

The mode of receiving communicants, or, as it was termed, "admitting members to the Church," varied in different denominations. The Baptists were very strict; even requiring that candidates should give expression to their religious experience, and explain how they were converted, through means of an oral address to the little community, or of a written paper to be read by the minister or a deacon. The Independents were rather less rigid than the Baptists, in some cases dispensing with any requirement of the kind now mentioned, being satisfied with a report from the officers of the Church after conversation with the applicant; but they demanded assent, in some way, to articles of faith, and to the old Church covenant preserved in their ecclesiastical records. The Presbyterians entered into no such spiritual scrutiny as did their brethren, and asked for no such theological confession, but were satisfied with the recommendation of the pastor.

After public service, comprising a long extempore prayer, the reading of Scripture, a sermon, and psalmody—the Baptists now adopting the latter practice—there came the Communion of the Lord's Supper, frequently in the afternoon, when the general congregation retired, "and the doors were shut." Conscien-

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Church at Cockermouth," "The Annals of Coggeshall," "Congregationalism in Yorkshire," and especially "Lancashire and its Puritanism and Nonconformity." I have had access to documents connected with Dr. Watts's meeting-house.

tiously adhering to the Master's example, "*who sat down* with the twelve"—and inadvertently adopting an ancient practice, manifested in Lombardic churches, by the position of the Bishop's chair *behind* the altar, and the presbyters' seats ranged on either side[1]—the Nonconformist Bishop of the eighteenth century seated himself at the end or side of the long table, with the elders or deacons on the right hand and the left. The table was covered with a fair linen cloth, on which were placed, when the church was large, two flagons with cups and plates—the flagons filled with wine, and the plates containing the bread, being sometimes made of silver. The pastor began by reading the Words of Institution, prefacing them, perhaps, with a short address; then he proceeded to break bread, to "give thanks," and to repeat the solemn declaration of the Saviour, "This is my body which was broken for you." The elders or deacons took round the bread to the communicants, who occupied the pews; and the pastor poured out the wine and again gave thanks, after which he repeated the further declaration, "This is the cup of the new testament in my blood, which was shed for many for the remission of sins." During the distribution of the "elements" there was profound silence, and at the

[1] This traditional arrangement is still partly preserved in the Basilican church of St. Peter, where the Pope, rising from his chair, proceeds to say mass with his face to the nave.

close, "when they had sung a hymn," they contributed to the offertory or collection and parted, with the Divine blessing pronounced by the president.[1]

The choice of the minister being a grave matter, the people had a day of fasting and prayer for Divine direction. A candidate was invited to preach, and if approved, in some cases, he was first received into communion, by dismissal from the Church he had left, and then chosen to the pastorate, after which, by further fasting and prayer, he was solemnly set apart to the pastoral charge—neighbouring ministers being generally invited to take part in a service on the occasion. Such was the Baptist and Congregational practice; the Presbyterian method differed a little, the people doing less and the neighbouring ministers doing more, both in the choice and the ordination. The laying on of hands was customary with most, if not all the denominations. How they behaved to a minister after they had chosen him, depended on the disposition of both parties, and on a variety of circumstances. Instances of strife, jealousy, and painful separation occurred; but numerous instances of a far different kind are recorded in old Church books, and in Nonconformist history. Incomes were commonly

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[1] This account corresponds with the description of *modern* Nonconformist usage given by me, at Lord Ebury's request, to the Royal Commission of Ritual, and printed in the Third Report.

small. Dr. Watts and his successor received only about £100 a year. In the country, salaries were much less, and had to be eked out by contributions from Trusts, instituted, like Queen Anne's Bounty, in aid of poor benefices.[1] Presents were made, and respect was shown in divers ways. A new pastor received a warm welcome, and there are Church books containing entries to the effect that a deputation had been despatched to meet him on his way; and exuberant kindness and reverential attention would go so far as to send a coach and four to conduct the elect and his family to their destined home. So far from Nonconformity in those days being a levelling system, we are informed of a Presbyterian minister, that "he had high notions of the ministerial power, and thought that it was derived from the Apostles, who had their commission from Christ: so that his opinion was, that Christ had granted a charter—that was his word—by virtue of which all ministers had power to rule and act in the Church, as such, at all times and upon all occasions."[2] Many Churches, with all their democratic theories, practically acted on that opinion.

Dissenting academies continued to be boarding

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[1] I have now lying before me the clauses of a will by John Warner, dated 1725, appointing Dr. Watts and others trustees of the sum of £1000 towards the support of Dissenting ministers in the country.

[2] The person referred to was Mr. Hallett, who had an academy at Exeter. See Murch's "Presbyterian Churches," p. 501.

schools for the education both of ministers and laymen.[1] Many of the pupils were young; and instruction was imparted by the principal, aided perhaps by an assistant or two.

Newington Green, smiled at by some and honoured by others, as the "Seat of the Dissenting muses,"[2] could, at the opening of the eighteenth century, boast of more than one establishment of this description; but they had no permanent foundation, and therefore soon disappeared, as tutors died or removed. We can distinctly trace the removal of Dr. Oldfield from Newington to Hoxton; but soon after arriving there he vanishes out of sight; what became of his academy we cannot tell. Also Dr. Ridgley, author of an elaborate "System of Divinity," once in high Nonconformist repute, carried on during his London ministry the work of education, assisted by John James, F.R.S., a friend of Sir Isaac Newton, and an ingenious scholar, educated at Merchant Taylors' school.

Down in the city of Gloucester there resided Samuel Jones, an Oxford man, ejected from a living in Wales, who numbered amongst his pupils, as already noticed, Secker, afterwards Primate of all England; and, what was a greater distinction, Butler, afterwards Bishop of Durham. These Dissenting boys learned to value their mastery in-

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[1] See "Church of the Revolution" for earlier history, p. 413.

[2] Bogue and Bennett's "Hist.," vol. i. p. 321.

structions; and in 1711, Secker wrote a letter praising the Academy as "an extraordinary place of education,"—where he hoped his improvements would be answerable to his advantages. He speaks of his tutor in the highest terms, as preserving his pupils from negligence and immorality. We find that they studied logic as well as Greek and Latin, plunged into Jewish antiquities and attacked Hebrew, the Talmud, Masora, and Cabala. On Wednesdays they read Dionysius's Periegesis with notes mostly geographical; and Isocrates and Terence were conned twice a week. The boys, says the young correspondent, rose at five o'clock every morning, and always spoke Latin, "except when below stairs amongst the family." "We pass our time very agreeably." [1]

At Shrewsbury there was an Academy, under James Owen, Dr. Benion, John Reynolds, and Dr. Gyles.

Taunton in Somersetshire enjoyed the ministry of Samuel Warren—educated at Oxford—who in the stormy reign of Charles II. knew what it was to be fined and imprisoned; but who devoted himself under James II. and William III. to the work of tuition. The seminary continued to exist under Stephen James and Henry Grove. Timothy Jollie, whose "voice was music" and "his elocution fascinating," and whose talents and arguments were pronounced

[1] The Letter is printed in Bogue and Bennett's "History," vol. i. pp. 347-350.

to be "extraordinary," conducted an Institution at Attercliff, near Sheffield, until the year 1714. Then, like so many others, it passes out of notice, to reappear, it is said, after some hidden course, in the Academy at Heckmondwicke in 1756.[1]

It is unnecessary, and it would be difficult to trace the obscure history of seminaries in the West of England, at Exeter, Tiverton, Bridgewater, Colyton; but it is important to remark, that the large number of schools both for ministers and laymen, scattered over the country, indicate a strong desire for an educated ministry; and illustrate efforts made to supply the want of English University culture, from the enjoyment of which Nonconformists were cut off. Also the facts recited place in a very melancholy light the tendency of the Schism Act, which, if not repealed, would have extinguished these flickering lights up and down the land, and consigned Dissent to the depths of ignorance. And as it was, with all the mitigations which followed, the worthy men who devoted themselves to these useful labours suffered great and frequent interruptions from the exclusive and intolerant spirit which lurked in so many quarters.[2]

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[1] See Bogue and Bennett's "History of Dissenters," vols. i. p. 300, ii. p. 528, from which the account of these seminaries is chiefly taken.

[2] As an illustration of the remark, we are referred to Grove's "Posthumous Works," vol. i. p. 302.

Some peculiarities belonging to one denomination require attention before we proceed further.

A strong bond of union existed among those who practised baptism by immersion, and confined it to adults. They were drawn together on the subject by bonds of sympathy, and as they stood shoulder to shoulder on the field of controversy, they presented a phalanx in the face of their foes. Public disputations had been fashionable at an earlier age. Baptists and Presbyterians had entered the lists in the days of the Commonwealth, and a passion for that sort of conflict, though it declined as time rolled on, did not expire till the end of the century; even then it did not completely disappear.

A tournament of this description was held at Portsmouth in 1699, strange to say, by the authority of William III., who, appealed to by a Presbyterian Major, a Presbyterian Colonel, and a Presbyterian Mayor, granted them leave "publicly to vindicate the common cause of the Reformed Churches;" and actually ordered all officers, civil and military, to attend for the preservation of peace and order. Three Presbyterians were pitted against three Baptists. They began their speeches at ten in the morning, and did not conclude them before six in the evening; after which, the Presbyterian Colonel published an advertisement, declaring that the Presbyterians "sufficiently defended their doctrines, and worsted their adversaries." To this deliverance, of course, those on the

other side objected; and the question, at the end, remained precisely where it had been at the beginning.[1] This was not the last useless debate of the kind; some years afterwards, the lists were prepared for another of these exhibitions. This time the Baptists were arrayed against the Quakers; and the place of conflict chosen was Burton in Northamptonshire. Some wise men in London issued a friendly letter of advice, oddly enough, however, urging political grounds as the reason why the contemplated discussion should be abandoned. There had been tumults just before, and an invasion had been threatened; the writers of the letter therefore said disaffected persons would be glad of an occasion to represent Dissenters as authors of strife; so they recommended the good people to drop their intention, and remain quiet. But the good people would not hearken to the peacemakers. They met, and fought out their battle without deciding the point between them;[2] then they resolved to meet again, which happily they failed to do, owing to a sound and effectual expostulation on the part of their London correspondents.

General Assemblies of Baptist Churches had been held in the seventeenth century; but the distance between one Church and another in the provinces had occasioned much inconvenience, consequently it was

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[1] Ivimey's "History of the Baptists," p. 555.

[2] Crossby's "History of Baptists," vol. iv. pp. 177–183.

determined to form local associations; and in 1704 an important meeting was held in London. Another is noticed the next year. The first consisted of thirteen Churches; the second of ten. Some of the Churches were small and uninfluential, others of importance sent no representatives, so that the decisions reached carried little or no weight. But amongst other resolutions passed at the meeting of the Theological Assembly, one is recorded of a doctrinal nature too significant to be overlooked.—"That the Churches be informed, it is the opinion of the Assembly, that the doctrine of sanctification by the imputation of the holiness of Christ's nature, does in its consequence render inherent holiness by the Holy Spirit unnecessary, and tends to overthrow natural as well as revealed religion."[1] The rejection of the doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness was a decided departure from the old Puritan standards of belief; and the consequence deduced from it would be denied by those who continue to maintain it. The resolution shows that, so far at least, a change of opinion had arisen amongst such of the Particular Baptists as concurred in the sentiment expressed; but it does not necessarily imply the denial by such persons of what would now be called the system of moderate Calvinism.

The next year, representatives of ten Churches

[1] Crossby, vol. iv. p. 6.

proceeded to exclude from their fellowship a Baptist Community meeting at Winchester House, Southwark, on the ground of disorderly proceedings. Such assemblies continued to meet annually, some in the provinces as well as that in London, and it is curious to find it stated respecting the meeting of 1739—a little later than the boundary of our present division,—that business was conducted with great unity, and that the brethren "bestowed an honour upon Mr. Moulden, by electing him to the dignity of the office of a Messenger to the Baptized Churches, an office parallel with,—in honour, though not so beneficial—that of a Bishop, if not an Archbishop, in the Established Church." [1]

From these Associations it might be supposed that the Baptist ministers and Churches at large were alike in theological sentiment, and acted in unison with one another; but this was not the case. The question of open and strict communion existed, some Churches excluding from the Lord's table those whom they regarded as unbaptized; and other Churches offering a welcome to all believers. But a deeper question existed with regard to theological opinion. Baptists continued to be distinguished, according as they adopted Arminian or Calvinistic views. The Arminians, believing in general redemption, were termed General Baptists: the Calvinists,

[1] Crossby, vol. iv. p. 14.

believing in particular redemption, were called Particular Baptists. Yet for some time, the line of distinction does not seem to have been deeply marked. In the meetings just referred to, though some present were Particular Baptists, it does not appear that all were so; and a Baptist pastor, writing in the year 1717, speaks of Churches which did not like to be called by either of these names, some agreeing in part with Arminianism, and in part with Calvinism. He mentions as a fact, that Churches which had before borne these different appellations, were now blended into one, and cites examples of London Churches whose members were partly of one opinion and partly of another. Ministers, too, after having presided over General Baptists, were elected by Particular Baptists; but this might arise from a change in their theological sentiments.[1] At all events, for a time the distinction between the two parties seems to have been by no means sharp; but it became sharp enough afterwards. The Particular Baptists did not gradually decline from orthodoxy, as did the General Baptists, many of whom, especially in the West of England, were caught within the current of free inquiry, and proceeded from Trinitarianism to Arianism, and from Arianism to Socinianism. The General Baptists being thus in a state of transition, it was to be expected that varieties of opinion would prevail

[1] Wilson's "Dissenting Churches," vol. iv. p. 13.

among them. Some of the existing distinctions were such as could scarcely be conjectured apart from historical facts. One division was based upon the maintenance of the six principles enumerated in the Epistle to the Hebrews,—the foundation of repentance from dead works; faith towards God; the doctrine of Baptism; of laying on of hands; of the resurrection of the dead; and of final judgment.[1] The laying on of hands came to be in this division an important point. A General Baptist Church in White's Alley, formed in the Revolution year, 1688, would on no account omit the practice of laying on hands in connection with baptism. So tenacious were the brethren in this matter, that when their pastor expressed doubts respecting it, they united with other Churches of the same opinion in suspending him from office.[2]

Five Churches of this order became bound together by a pecuniary tie, one Captain Pierce Johns, in 1698, having bequeathed estates for their joint endowment.[3]

In reference to the social life of Dissenters, it may be observed, that in the West of England, at Exeter for instance, Nonconformists were numerous and powerful, comprising some of the wealthiest citizens;[4] and in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the

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[1] Heb. vi. 1, 2. [2] Wilson, vol. i. p. 136.
[3] Wilson, vol. iv. p. 178. [4] Murch, p. 386.

Eastern Counties—indeed wherever homes of industrial activity were found—Dissenters, like the Huguenots, were sure to prosper. Their habits helped them in this respect; and perhaps, in the end, when they became rich, and could keep a coach, they left the conventicle for the parish church. Some in the higher walks of life retained Nonconformist principles and adorned them by their domestic and social habits. In Lady Abney's family Lord's days were devoutly observed. Worship morning and evening was maintained, and there might be a little Puritan strictness in the government of her servants, whilst she won their affection by her unfeigned sympathies. "She opened her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue was the law of kindness."[1] She had a daughter, Miss Sarah Abney, who died long before her mother; and respecting her Dr. Watts, in a style characteristic of Nonconformists at that time, remarked in a funeral sermon preached for her at Theobalds in 1722, "Nor did she forbid all the polite diversions of youth agreeable to her rank, nor did reason, or religion, or her superior relatives forbid her; yet she was still awake to secure all that belongs to honour and virtue, nor did she use to venture to the utmost bounds of what so-

[1] Funeral Sermon for Dame Mary Abney, who died in 1709, by her pastor, Samuel Price, successor to Dr. Watts. I have sought to condense the biographical parts of the discourse.

briety and religion might allow." "Dame Sarah," as her minister tells us, "kept her worldly accounts all written fair with her own hand in a very regular method; and as she had large resources, she abounded in the grace of charity." "It may be truly said of her, as it was of Dorcas, that she was full of good works and alms deeds which she did."

"Abney Park Cemetery," as it is called by some; "The Dissenters' Necropolis," as it is termed by others; covers the site of the mansion and gardens where Dame Mary sometimes lived after her husband's death. I have an indistinct remembrance of it, just before it was pulled down, with its old brick front, its old brick wall, and its old iron gate, redolent of the times of William III. and Queen Anne. It was in its prime during those eventful reigns—full of quaint and somewhat cumbrous furniture—and compassed about, in the garden portion of the territory, with noble trees and primly cut shrubs, and box-bordered beds of tulips and roses, and sundry old-fashioned flowers, cultivated according to the most approved taste of Dutch gardening. There she provided for the comfort of Watts through all his days of affliction. "Madam," said he to a noble lady who called to see him, "you are come on a very memorable day." "Why so remarkable?" she asked. "This day thirty years," replied the invalid, "I came hither to the house of my good friend, Sir Thomas Abney, intending to spend but one

single week under his friendly roof; and I have extended my visit to the length of exactly thirty years." "Sir," added Dame Mary, "what you have termed a long thirty years' visit, I consider as the shortest visit my family ever received." Watts was domestic chaplain. Morning and evening he led the devotions of the household, and on Sunday night preached to the family. Two discourses delivered, not at Newington, but at Theobalds, are inserted in the first volume of his sermons, under the title of "Appearance before God;" and we can picture the thoughtful conductor of the service, with pale face and bent figure, but with piercing eye and distinct though feeble voice, slowly and impressively unfolding his subject to the great delight of the good dame, her children and visitors; while coachmen and footmen and other servants were sitting round the hall, not inattentive to the man whose gentle ways won their hearts and inspired their sympathy and love.

In merchants' dwellings and tradesmen's shops in the City, in manor houses and country farms, the primitive life of the former century might still be found, with such modifications as time is sure to make in old customs and habits. Still there was strict "Sabbath" observance, and domestic worship, and reading of expositions, and daily order; with abstinence from fashionable amusements, yet with no lack of innocent recreation. Traditions of what had been done and suffered under Charles and James

were carefully preserved, much to the confirmation of Dissent through a hatred of religious oppression. Baptisms, marriages, and funerals went on as usual; the first administered by Nonconformist pastors, the last conducted also by them, where burial grounds were attached to Meeting Houses, or where the objectionable practice existed of burying the dead under the pulpit or in the aisles.[1] Marriages could not be celebrated by Dissenting ministers; for the legal sanction and for the ecclesiastical blessing of the nuptial rite, Nonconformists had to go to church.

Numerous instances of piety among the humbler classes are found in funeral sermons, tracts, Church records, and local histories of Dissent; and in the memoirs of distinguished men small windows open, through which we get glimpses of religious character amongst the poor and uneducated.[2]

Touching the statistics of Dissent, De Foe, in 1702, reckoned Nonconformists altogether at two millions.[3] Another census, drawn up in 1715 by Daniel Neal,

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[1] At funerals refreshments were provided beyond what is common now; and it was not unusual to distribute religious books among the mourners and friends. I have in my possession a copy of "The Mourner's Refuge," given at Lady Abney's funeral. It belonged to Dr. Watts.

[2] See his story of Jonathan Brown in Calamy's "Own Life," vol. ii. pp. 120–135, and two anecdotes in the following pages, 135–141.

[3] Wilson's "Life of Defoe," vol. ii. p. 48. It is remarkable and amusing that in 1698, Prideaux says in a letter, "I think

author of "The History of the Puritans," shows that there were then in Middlesex ninety-one congregations, including twenty-six of the Baptist denomination. The total throughout England amounted to 1107, of which 247 were Baptists. In North and South Wales returns were made of only forty-three. The Presbyterians formed a large majority, though Independents had increased; the Baptists remaining the least numerous of the three divisions.

At the end of the third decade of the century misgivings arose amongst Dissenters as to the state of their affairs. Complaints were made that the Churches had declined both in number and in spiritual efficiency. A publication appeared entitled, "An Inquiry into the Causes of the Decay of the Dissenting Interest," in which the author questioned the assumption, noticing that several metropolitan congregations had risen to prosperity, though others had sunk into feebleness. This inquirer complained that orthodox divines in many cases were bigoted; that sermons were too long; that prayers were too short; that youths were put to High Church

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never any Church was better established than ours, the toleration which is now allowed them that do oppose it, makes only way for the driving of Christianity out of the land, for the only sect that grows upon it are Quakers, who are no Christians. All sects besides begin to dwindle to nothing. I am sure they do so where I am concerned." "Hist. MSS. Commission," Fifth Report, Int. xiv.

schools; that encouragement was afforded to strolling Scotch ministers; that vacant pulpits were mismanaged; and that older ministers did not properly treat their younger brethren. As one great remedy, the writer suggested that Dissenting preachers should cultivate polite habits. A young minister destined to eminence[1] published a reply entitled "Free Thoughts on the Best Means of Reviving the Dissenting Interest." He pealed off the rind and reached the core. "We are concerned," he says, "for this interest, not merely as the cause of a distinct party, but of truth, honour and liberty; and I will add in a great measure, the cause of serious piety too." His idea seems to have been, that the decline of Nonconformity, so far as it obtained, arose from spiritual declension amongst its professors. "If we find upon inquiry," he adds, "that godliness is departing, it surely deserves to be mentioned as one cause at least of the decay of our interest; and that all who sincerely wish well to it, should express their affection by exerting themselves with the utmost zeal for the revival of practical religion amongst us." One remedy he urged was a strain of preaching, not drily orthodox, but full of earnestness and unction, evangelical in spirit, as well as opinion, and adapted to the popular mind of the age. The common people

[1] This was Philip Doddridge, at the time, 1729, minister of a small congregation at Kibworth, Leicestershire.

were in his estimation the strength of Nonconforming Churches; and therefore he recommended such a method of ministration as should be suited to them. "He who would be generally acceptable to Dissenters must be an evangelical, an experimental, a plain, and affectionate preacher."

"A person who came from Northampton, to reside in London," availed himself of the opportunities afforded to inquire into the state of metropolitan Churches, and has left behind a curious record of the results, dated 1731.[1] He takes notice of the preachers of the day, not exactly in the sensational style now so prevalent; but yet in a way which indicates partiality and prejudice, and prevents us from placing implicit confidence in his statements. He reports that there were resident in London seventy-four Presbyterian and Independent Ministers, and one congregation which he denominates the *Loggerheads*, whoever they might be. In Southwark there were ten Meeting Houses with large congregations; Gravel Lane was occupied by Dr. Marriott, whose "public composures were judicious and valuable," but wanting

[1] This document is preserved in Dr. Williams's Library, Grafton Street. It is entitled a "View of the Dissenting Interest in London, of the Presbyterian and Independent Denominations, from the year 1695 to the 25th of December, 1731, with a postscript of the present state of the Baptists." The description of the person in the words just quoted, "is added in different handwriting."

an "agreeable delivery." The Minister of Deadman's Place was Mr. Killingham, "a warm Calvinist, and of a warm natural disposition, which spirit promoted his falling out with his people." Mr. Read, of St. Thomas's, was "a serious preacher, but in sentiments only of the middle way." Horsley Down "had the largest auditory in Southwark"; and the Minister was a person of "great life and vivacity;" and, adds the honest critic, "could he think closely and behave with a more becoming gravity, he would be much more considerable." Mr. Benson in St. John's Court, had just arrived from Abingdon, which he had left "because his people would not swallow down Arminianism." The sentiments of the Jamaica Row preacher were "not as agreeable as his gifts;" and the Lower Rotherhithe pastor had "good pulpit talents, but too great an opinion of himself."

This gentleman walked over to Stepney Meeting House, with "the green," and a pleasant country round about. His mind was full of the memory of Matthew Mead,—who, he said, so pleaded the cause of Christ's poor, that, at Pinners' Hall once, he obtained a collection of £300; ladies not provided to give in proportion to this stirring appeal, "pawned their watches and rings as pledges till they redeemed them"; but when our informant heard the pastor who at this visit occupied the pulpit, he could not speak of him as he did of the Puritan celebrity. "Although Mr. Hubbard," he remarks, "is a laborious and affectionate

preacher, yet it is accounted that the interest of this Church is much declining." The Minister in Goodman's Fields had "no small courage and boldness;" but he who presided at Petticoat Lane, Whitechapel, "had very little learning, and was very little polished, yet had been the instrument of good to many." Bethnal Green is noticed as a place supported by citizens who had retired from business, or whose affairs permitted them to seek country air—a description which suggests a rustic locality far different from the present East End of London; and indeed this special correspondent adds, "families of substance then preferred to go a further distance from the city." A former Minister of "the Meeting House near the Three Cranes," receives a more than ordinarily strange notice. After Mr. Gouge, "a popular preacher and a zealous Calvinist," there came one "who meddled with public affairs, which reaching the Parliament House, he had to be removed;" but before he took his leave, "he fell foul upon divers worthy Ministers," and then founded another Church, where "the people were all obliged to stand up while singing psalms; periwigs were discarded, and the men wore whiskers, and a new order passed for the women's garb." This strange person, whose name was Jacob, preached at Turners' Hall, Philpot Lane, where he reflected "publicly on King William, and drolled on the names of many worthy Ministers." A number of other Meeting Houses are mentioned, with details

of minute descriptions, giving peeps into the state of Nonconformity nowhere else to be found.

Two places he mentions of more than ordinary interest. Near Westminster Abbey, Dr. Calamy, as we have seen, was pastor of a flourishing Church. The country visitor had no love for him. "He is a good preacher, but a zealous man for the Kirk, and would be more useful if more consistent. He is a great opposer of narrow souls, and wherever his diocese reaches, he encourages persons of latitude enough, and were his schemes generally pursued, the national Church would find greater multitudes of daily converts." Some would say "Quite the contrary;" but at all events there can be no doubt as to the class of Dissenters to which this country critic belonged. He could not but enter the Meeting House in Bury Street, St. Mary Axe, where the Church under Dr. Watts and Mr. Price "continued in a most flourishing condition, and in 1731 was nearly twice as large as in 1695." The senior pastor inspired this stranger's admiration. "He is of a sweet, peaceable disposition, and as much as most men follows his Master's example in going about doing good;" but he has to do with men who trouble him, "particularly one Mr. Bradbury, a lecturer at Pinners' Hall, who from his own pulpit, and at the Hall, makes it his business to lampoon and satirize the Doctor's performances, and amongst them his psalms and hymns, for which so many Christians and Churches have reason to bless God."

The writer draws up his statistical account with the view of stopping a prevalent rumour, "that this interest is in a very low and declining condition;" yet he acknowledges it was not at the time advancing, as it had done, and for this he assigns certain reasons.

"One is the influence that is produced by the *Test Act*, by which all persons that enjoy places of profit or trust under the Government, or in particular corporations, are obliged to take the Sacrament in the Church of England; this has been a snare to many persons among the Dissenters, whereby they have been drawn from occasional to stated communion; and it has been often seen, that if parents do not, yet the children of such parents quit the Dissenting interest, and this mostly in families of figure and substance. Another cause of the Dissenting interest losing ground, is the manifest growth of error, by which is meant the spreading of Arminianism and Socinianism, which is very often the cause of Deism and Infidelity."

Again he observes "the Dissenting ministers of the Independent denomination are almost to a man Calvinists, and on that account are the more united in judgment of any set of Christians in the kingdom; and were they but as much cemented in affection, and acted with greater concert to serve the real interest of Christianity, much greater services might be expected of them; were some few of them masters of a little more temper, prudence, and charity, and others of a little more zeal, it would be a pleasing prospect; but although a perfect harmony and union is very desirable, yet, at present, it is a thing rather to be wished for than expected."

"There have been," it is added, "at least twenty persons who called themselves Dissenting ministers, who have conformed to the Church of England since the year 1718; and if the laity had travelled the same road in an equal proportion, that interest would have received a greater shock. And here it is worthy of remark that those persons that could not digest one article of faith (the Trinity, about which there had been discussions in the synod at Salters' Hall), are on a sudden so enlightened as to be convinced it is their duty to subscribe to thirty-nine; whilst those ministers that could not honestly subscribe one article, have to a man kept steady to the Dissenting interest, and have been instrumental in supporting it with honour." He adds, however, "There are many ministers, and a great number of private Christians of both denominations that zealously maintain the faith of the Gospel, who are an honour to their character, and who stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free."

Three stages are noticeable in the history of Nonconformist denominations. The first, is when persecution prevails, and the members of a proscribed sect are knit more closely together by the attacks made upon them from without. Zeal is then at a white heat, "the social principle mixes with the flame, and renders it more intense; strong parties are formed, and friends or lovers are not more closely connected than the members of these little communities." The second stage is one of reasoning and examination; opinions are canvassed; those who before testified by patient suffering, now defend themselves by argu-

ment; and keen polemical conflicts ensue. There is more of self-assertion, a bolder claim for the enjoyment of social privileges. Critical and ambitious habits unite; and under their influence, much early zeal subsides and expires. In the third stage, people get weary of controversy, for there is less of opposition, and with that there comes spiritless indifference:—

"That sobriety, industry, and abstinence from fashionable pleasures which distinguished the fathers, has made the sons wealthy, and eager to enjoy their riches; they long to mix with that world, a separation from which was the best guard to their virtues. A sense of shame creeps in upon them, when they acknowledge their relation to a disesteemed sect; they therefore endeavour to file off its peculiarities, but in so doing, they destroy its very being. . . . After having betrayed, perhaps, an aversion from having anything in common with the Church, they now affect to come as near it as possible; and, like a little boat that takes a large vessel in tow, the sure consequence is, the being drawn into its vortex. . . . They have worn off many forbidding singularities, and are grown more amiable and pleasing," "no longer obnoxious to the world, they are open to all the seductions of it."[1]

So far as inward spiritual strength dried up, and left members of the community open to influences which drew them off in another direction, so far also diminished zeal and activity in the way of gaining

[1] Mrs. Barbauld's "Works," vol. ii. p. 248.

fresh adherents would follow as a matter of course; and these circumstances would increase the tide of decline and the advance of decay. Except where the old Puritan fires continued to burn, few accessions would accrue, until the Methodist revival inspired afresh, drooping Churches of the Nonconformist order.

RELIGION IN ENGLAND UNDER GEORGE II.

CHAPTER VIII.

1727–1745.

GEORGE the First died in 1727, on his way to Hanover, and George the Second "reigned in his stead." The new Sovereign and the new Queen immediately left Richmond for Leicester Square, where the Lords of the Council assembled; and his Majesty, on accepting the government, took the usual oaths.[1] The King is described by one contemporary as a "brave and honest man, of moderate abilities but good intentions;"[2] and by another, it is said, that "he troubled himself little about religion, but jogged on quietly in that in which he had been bred, without scruples, doubts, zeal, or inquiry."[3] He had little knowledge and no taste, and was a slave to habit; "a thing done to-day" being regarded as "an unanswerable reason for his doing it to-morrow." Scarcely ever acting on his own judgment, and having the highest respect for the judgment of

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[1] A letter brought to light by the Historical MSS. Commission (Report IV., p. 525) describes the circumstances.

[2] Ibid., p. 531.

[3] Lord Chesterfield. See Stanhope's "Hist.," vol. ii. p. 113.

his wife—whom, in spite of mistresses, he seems to have really loved—it was a happy thing for him and the nation, that her character was a combination of intellectual ability, sweet dispositions, and a tolerant temper. Her literary accomplishments, and her powers of conversation fascinated her court, and especially the Whig bishops, who admired her liberality, whilst her gracious manners made her most popular with the people. She could discuss the subject of free will with metaphysical divines, for she was a correspondent of Leibnitz; she gratified those who were wandering out of old orthodox paths, for she admired Dr. Clarke, and he admired her; and to the Dissenters her accession was full of promise, inspiring within them hopes of augmented liberty. How far she forwarded the interests of spiritual religion is another question; but whatever might be her power over King, Court, and Church, it was exercised in the most unassuming manner. She stooped to conquer. The story goes that she was not exemplary in her behaviour when attending Divine worship. "What fault do people find with my conduct," she asked William Whiston, whose learning, ability, and eccentricities seem to have inspired her favour. He replied, "The fault they most complain of, is your Majesty's habit of talking in chapel." She promised amendment; but proceeding to ask with what other faults she was charged, he replied, "When your Majesty has amended

this, I'll tell you of the next."[1] Addresses of impassioned loyalty poured in from all quarters, ecclesiastical and civil; and the ministers of the three denominations are particularly mentioned as attending at court, to express in exuberant terms their attachment to the throne and the House of Hanover. They must have been highly gratified with the justice and charity expressed by the monarch to his Council when he said, "I find among my subjects such national charity and forbearance diffused throughout the kingdom, that the National Church repines not at the indulgence given to scrupulous consciences; and those who receive the benefits of the toleration envy not the Established Church the rights and privileges which they by law enjoy." Yet, at the moment when this gush of sentiment escaped royal lips, and the vision of Hebrew prophecy, "Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim," seemed to dawn upon the royal vision, surely some of the courtiers must have regarded the speech, even though their own production, as very poetical, and must have felt that the millennium was not so near as the King's words seemed to indicate.

The Jacobites were dismayed. The Hanoverians were exultant. Clouds gathered over High Church prospects, sunshine fell on Low Church views. The first Parliament, in the elections for which Whig

[1] Art. "Whiston," Biog. Brit.

Churchmen and Whig Dissenters worked hand-in-hand, was a perfect triumph. Most of the members were friends of the Government, and the great Whig Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, from the Treasury Bench, looked round on his numerous supporters with intense satisfaction. Parliament met in January, 1728. Convocation was prorogued to the 20th of March, when a further prorogation was proposed. But a member of the Lower House, before this was done, rose and showed that his Majesty had in a late address referred to the repression of profaneness and immorality, and that it became the Church to point out what would effectually promote his pious design. He said it could not be deemed unreasonable for any dutiful son or servant of Church and State to loosen his tongue strings at such a crisis, and gravely suggested that Deists and Socinians might be "struck dumb by the awful voice of Convocation." [1] The King and his ministers did not think so, and Convocation was not permitted to take up the subject.

Walpole's sincerity as the advocate of civil freedom for all religionists, was before long put to the test. At the close of the summer of 1730 an agitation commenced respecting the repeal of the Test Act. Dissenters pleaded in support of the design their attachment to the principles of the Revolution, their

[1] "Historic Register" for 1727, p. 175.

loyalty to the House of Hanover, their past services to the Government, their zeal at the last election, and their self-denial in having patiently accepted a statute of exclusion rather than weaken the Protestant interest. Such a matter would be publicly as well as privately discussed, and in 1732 Dr. Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's, issued a pamphlet on "The advantages proposed by repealing the Sacramental Test." His argument, in a few words, was as follows:—An establishment of religion is essential to a nation's welfare. If the existing one were abolished another must come in its place. Should an Act be passed to establish Presbyterianism, Independency, or any other form of ecclesiastical government, without question, all peaceable subjects ought to submit. The predominant sect must be exclusively supported. The public should sustain no other teachers, admit to public office no other persons, than members of the Established Church, whatever that Church may be. If that be just reasoning, he contended that the project for the repeal of the Test Act was inconsistent with the welfare of the existing National Church. Presbyterians, if admitted to office by themselves, would endeavour to establish their own sect, and would not tolerate Episcopalians. If indeed all denominations were admitted alike, that would be less pernicious; a jumble of principles might have the effect of contrary poisons mingled together, which a strong constitution would perhaps

probably survive. But this alternative he dismissed at once, and fell back on the other, to point out various inconveniences which would attend the establishment of a Presbyterian policy, and other premises laid down by this acute writer would scarcely commend themselves to Churchmen, any more than his conclusions would be agreeable to Dissenters. Such an argument as Swift's, since it completely begs the question, is not worth discussing. It does not appear that the publication had much effect; only as a curiosity it is worth a moment's notice. The Government certainly had no sympathy with the Dean. They professed a willingness to meet the wishes of their Dissenting friends, but they felt themselves hemmed in by difficulties. They saw the justice of repealing the Test, yet they feared to offend the clergy, who, like Swift, regarded it as a bulwark of the Establishment. To support the proposed measure would alienate the Churchmen, to resist it would alienate Dissenters. Sir Robert did not like the horns of this awkward dilemma.

The astute minister looked out for a policy at this juncture, and found it. "Now is not the time; persuade the Dissenters to wait awhile." This is the drift of his advice. He called the Queen to his aid, and the Queen called Hoadley to her side. Graciously addressing his lordship, she professed sympathy with him in the cause of liberty; but added, no doubt with much sweetness, "All times were not proper to do

proper things," a maxim which, from a party point of view, could be urged on plausible and specious grounds. The difficulties at that moment, the collisions of interest, and the great danger of offending the High Church party, were points pressed on the notice of the right reverend prelate. He had, however, the honesty to avow, that having set out in life with an attachment to civil and religious liberty, and having given pledges to that effect, he could not alter his position. Whenever a proposal for repeal should come before Parliament he must give it his support. But he added, and here was a loophole, if on feeling the pulse of the nation he found that the proposal at present would injure the interests of the Whigs, without promoting the interests of Dissenters, he would strive by influence with Nonconformist friends to avert for awhile the rising agitation.

The rumour went abroad that the Queen had sent for the bishop, and that the bishop had been convinced by her that the Dissenters' desire at the time was unreasonable. Hearing this, Hoadley became angry, and went to Walpole, telling him that such a story as that certainly would not forward any party interest, for he must think of his own character and reputation, and contradict the report altogether. Walpole treated what Hoadley had heard, as idle talk not worth notice, and professed great regard for his Episcopal friend ; but, as to the main point, whether the Nonconformist scheme at that juncture should

receive ministerial support or not, he said his lordship knew what he thought of the subject; but the fact was, the firmest friends of the minister believed that to introduce the contemplated Bill would break in upon the Established Church so as to arouse irresistible opposition, and therefore must not be attempted at present. Hoadley, wishing to make terms for the future, now asked if he might give the Nonconformists a hope of finding more favour whenever a new Parliament should meet. Sir Robert was too wary to give any pledge, and the bishop went his way to do what he could to quiet his friends outside the Church.

The Dissenters had begun themselves to move. The ministers of the three denominations, in the month of October, 1732, resolved that it was advisable for a number of lay gentlemen to meet and consult as to what steps were fit to be taken with relation to the repeals, as they were termed, at the next session of Parliament. With this Committee the Bishop most likely entered into negotiations,—certainly, members of the Cabinet did so. Lord Hervey, not a very trustworthy reporter, speaks of the Dissenting Committee as composed of "monied men of the City and scriveners, who were absolutely dependent on Sir Robert, and chosen by his contrivance." However that may be, the account given of the interview between the different parties is very amusing. "The Lord President looked wise, was

dull, took snuff, and said nothing," Lord Harrington, he adds, adopted the silent passive part. The Lord Chancellor, and the Duke of Newcastle had done better, had they followed that example; but they both spoke very plentifully, and were both equally unintelligible.[1] The public announcement of the result appears in a newspaper called "The Courant." The Committee reported to "the generality," as their opinion, that the repeal, "if attempted at present, was not likely to be successful. After long debates, the majority did not agree therewith, and moved to recommit that opinion." The London Dissenters were by no means satisfied with the way in which the matter had been managed, and forthwith determined that "each Dissenting congregation of the three denominations" should choose deputies to represent them; but when these deputies met in Committee, they resolved that an application at the next meeting of Parliament, for a repeal or explanation, was not likely to be attended with success. The agitation of the question ended for a time; but out of this election of Dissenting Deputies, sprung that important body which has ever since borne this well-known name.

This disappointment of hope in 1732 was followed

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[1] This is the narrative in Lord Hervey's Mem. vol. i., p. 157; the other particulars are taken from "An Impartial Account of the late Transactions of the Dissenters," &c., 1736. See also "Sketch of the History of the Deputies," 1813.

by a strange and troublesome legal process, and by outbreaks of popular violence. In 1733, the Chancellor of the diocese in which a distinguished Nonconformist minister resided—not out of any ill-will, as he professed, though his previous conduct had been extremely uncivil, but simply to establish and vindicate the authority of Ecclesiastical Courts—instituted a prosecution against an unlicensed academy at Northampton. "The wisest parties I have consulted," said the persecuted tutor, "look upon these proceedings as a very artful scheme to bring us under ecclesiastical inspection, more than we have ever been, and they think as I do, that it is trusting our academies and schools to the impartiality of a party which has not always shown the nicest honour, not to touch upon its integrity."[1] The question they raised was taken into the civil court. Westminster Hall decided in the Nonconformist's favour. The judges ordered a prohibition, which it was thought would secure him from further trouble in that quarter; but proceedings were continued. However, they were soon cut short by the disapproval of the Ministry and the interposition of the King.

In September, 1733, the academy buildings were attacked by a Jacobite mob; the ringleaders were apprehended and brought to justice; but it would

[1] Jan. 31, 1734. Doddridge was the party inculpated, of whom much will be said hereafter.

appear that the chief magistrate of the town did not in the affair deal out even-handed justice. Other breaches of the peace, in connexion with religious services legalized by the Toleration Act, occurred some little time afterwards, when a Dissenting student, preaching at Brixworth in Northamptonshire, had stones thrown at him through a window, and his friends were treated with indignity and violence.

At the end of the year 1734, there was a general election, upon which Sir Robert Walpole is said to have spent out of his own pocket, as much as £60,000. The result was not what he wished, for though he obtained a majority, it was smaller than before; Dissenters no less than Whig Churchmen, promoted the return of members pledged to support the great Minister; but when Parliament assembled, in January, 1735, the question of "the Repeals," came again on the carpet, only to be once more postponed.

The Dissenting Deputies consulted with Walpole, who counselled delay, but added, that as the Dissenters had more than once deferred to his advice, and in the late election had behaved so well, he would leave it to them to make the attempt the following session, should they think fit so to do. When the Committee took the matter in hand, they found that various difficulties were raised, and they were threatened with opposition from the very Ministers on whom they placed their dependence. It was at length resolved to make a desperate push; and on the 12th

of March, 1736, Mr. Plumer, member for Hertfordshire, one of the Opposition, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts. Rather a long debate ensued, and the mover gained the support of known friends to the Established Church, but Sir Robert made a wavering speech, and then voted against the measure. The motion was lost by 125 against 251—a result which the Committee of the Deputies expected, though, in deference to the opinions of friends, they had done their utmost to support the measure.[1] Whilst the Deputies were unsuccessful in reference to this object, they obtained redress in a few London parishes where Dissenters felt aggrieved, by clauses for the building of new churches, at St. Leonard's, Shoreditch; at St. Mary's, Rotherhithe; and St. Olave's, Southwark.

To prevent an unnecessary interruption in the narrative which follows, we may anticipate a few years by saying that in 1738 the question of the Repeals once more came up, when the Deputies prepared a list of "reasons for repealing or explaining so much of the Test and Corporation Acts as relates to the taking the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a qualification for offices." A copy was despatched to every member of the House of Commons, and again, in March, 1739, a motion was made to bring

[1] "Sketch of the History of the Proceedings of the Deputies," p. 4.

in a Bill to the effect now expressed. Who introduced the motion is not known; but there was a long debate; and the proposal being for a second time rejected by the Government, it was lost as before. Now 188 voted against 89.[1] Yet after this rebuff the Committee did not despair. They wrote to their friends to justify what they had done, saying that members to whom they applied for support acknowledged the reasonableness of the measure, and that to accuse them of distressing the Administration was unfair, as the motion was made and supported by known and approved Whigs. Probably the Dissenters had offended the Ministers on the former occasion, by seeking help from their opponents.

Returning to the year 1736; in the month of March a petition was presented from the Quakers for relief from the vexatious and expensive operation of the tithe laws, through prosecutions carried on in the ecclesiastical courts. Leave was immediately given to amend and render more effectual the laws for the recovery of ecclesiastical imposts. A Bill to that effect was framed. In case a Quaker should not submit to the decision of two magistrates, recourse was to be had to the courts at Westminster. On a refusal to pay, the amount was to be levied by distress. The Bill was largely debated in the House of Commons, and then carried by 164 to 48. From

[1] "Sketch of the Hist. of the Dep.," p. 10.

the Lords it met with a different reception. It was supported by Lords Harrington, Hervey, Carteret, the Duke of Argyll, and Earl Hay; and opposed by the Bishop of Salisbury, the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Hardwicke, and Lord Lovell. The Earl of Scarborough and Lord Bathurst also addressed the House. The debate turned upon no great principle of religious liberty, or of contributing to a system conscientiously opposed, for no idea was entertained of exempting Quakers from payment. The controversy was as to legal proceedings, which, without being obnoxious to the Society of Friends, would secure their discharge of debts claimed on behalf of the Church of England. "Tythe" it was said, "is a tax which is now due by the law of the land, and must remain so; therefore the Quaker must pay it as well as every other man subjected to it by law. Nor does he desire to be absolutely free from it; he only desires, since his conscience will not allow him to pay it voluntarily and freely, that you would take it from him in the easiest and least expensive method."[1] Lord Hardwicke professed himself ready to help the Quakers, but he despaired of doing anything that session; the settlement of the question would require more time than they could then give to it; and, at all events, the Bill required much modification before it was fit to pass. The question

[1] "Parl. Hist.," vol. ix. p. 1181.

of committing it was decided in the negative by 54 to 35. Fifteen bishops voted against it.[1]

Queen Caroline died in November, 1737, manifesting through her illness that sweetness of disposition for which her life had been so remarkable; except—and it is a sad exception—that to the last she refused to receive into her presence the Prince of Wales, who, being her own son, whatever might be his offence, had the strongest claim on her affection and forgiveness.[2] She was buried, with some confusion in the service; but it is interesting to learn that Handel's anthem was sung for the first time at her obsequies, and certainly it has been heard over many a grave where it was far less appropriate: "When the ear heard her, then it blessed her; and when the eye saw her, it gave witness to her. How are the mighty fallen! She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces."[3]

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[1] "Parliamentary Hist.," vol. ix. p. 1219.

[2] The scandalous stories told by Lord Hervey I do not know how to believe, especially that in p. 514 of the first volume of his Memoirs.

[3] Stanley's "Memorials of Westminster Abbey," p. 184. In Lord Hervey's Memoirs, under the year 1736, are amusing conversations of the Queen with Bishop Hare. The Church and the Court were not on good terms—"All the bishops except Salisbury and London made their peace again so well with the Court, that they stood much on the same foot after the conclusion of the session as they did before it began; the Court satisfying itself with its having been proved to the bishops of how little consideration they were without the support of the Court,

As her influence over the King in ecclesiastical no less than political matters was so remarkable, it is interesting, as the illustrious lady vanishes from view, to notice the bishops who were made during her life after the accession of her husband. In the ten years, more than ten changes occurred in the dioceses of England and Wales. Of these only the most remarkable deserve any notice.

Smallbrook, Bishop of St. David's, already mentioned as author of a work on miracles in reply to Woolston, was in 1730 raised to the see of Lichfield and Coventry, in consequence of Chandler being at the time translated from that see to the throne of Durham. In both these appointments honour was done to learning. So also in the case of Tanner, raised from a Christ Church canonry to the bishopric of St. Asaph, in 1731, and in the case of Maddox, promoted in 1736 from the deanery of Wells to succeed Tanner. In 1734 two other appointments took place, that of Benson, who had been prebendary at Durham, a man of piety and worth; and that of the well-known Hoadley, promoted from Salisbury to Winchester. The most important change of all was in 1737, when Potter succeeded Wake in the primacy.

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and the bishops glad, after nobody would receive them, to return again to those who, though offended, were ready to absolve them" (vol. ii. p. 104). Of course this is but a remark of Lord Hervey's; it shows, however, the estimate formed of bishops by a distinguished courtier of that day.

The appointment at first looks strange, in connection with the Queen's ecclesiastical influence; for Potter was a High Churchman; but then he was also a man of pre-eminent learning, and a professed Whig in political opinion. These two recommendations were powerful with her Majesty. She admired the author of "The Antiquities of Greece," and the editor of Plutarch, Basil, and Lycophron; and she liked an argument on points of doctrine with one who had been Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford. In the policy of supporting Walpole and a Whig ministry—very important in Caroline's estimation—she could count on the adherence of the new Archbishop. So that all things considered, the elevation of Potter quite accorded with her views and her wishes. His influence on the destinies of the Church is another matter. A "cold and dry orthodoxy" has been attributed to him; but with it there has also been ascribed valuable service done to the Church of England by his opposition to all attempts at relaxing the rigour of clerical subscription.[1] Hoadley was friendly to that object, and might have promoted it had he been made Archbishop; and therefore the choosing of Potter in preference is considered by some to have been a security to the Establishment in an hour of peril. But it is curious to find alleged as a reason for this view, that

[1] The "History of the Church of England," by Canon Perry, vol. iii. p. 361.

latitudinarianism was at the time on the increase. It had been increasing *in spite* of subscription. Many could subscribe on some ground, no doubt satisfactory to themselves, however they differed from Church formularies. How that could be a defence which in fact was found to be so much gossamer thread, it is very hard to understand. Potter did not forget that a large measure of state and dignity pertained to the archiepiscopal see. Shorn of a good deal of the feudal splendour which dazzled beholders in the middle ages, and perhaps not keeping up the costly style of living of some of the archbishops in the seventeenth century, yet—according to William Whiston, who says he recommended him to the Queen for the primacy—he exacted homage and affected display. "I then little dreamed," Whiston adds, "that this Dr. Potter, by going to Lambeth, would take high and pontifical state upon him; that he could bear the kneeling of even bishops before him, when, at a solemn meeting of the members of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, he gave the blessing, which I myself saw; that he would procure half a dozen footmen to walk bare-headed by him when he was in his coach, three of a side, besides his trainbearer at such his appearances."[1]

Joseph Butler had been appointed Chaplain to the Queen through Sherlock's influence. In conversation

[1] Whiston's "Memoirs," p. 359.

with her Majesty, who delighted in Butler's philosophical sermons, Sherlock mentioned his name. She said she thought that he was dead. "No, madam," replied Sherlock, "but he is buried." This led to Butler being made Clerk of the Closet in 1736: that same year he published his "Analogy." Charmed with the work, and charmed with the author's conversation, she recommended him to her husband for a vacant bishopric. She did not live to see her wish fulfilled; but in 1738 Butler became Bishop of Bristol—a poor see, yet it proved a step to another pre-eminently lucrative. It is curious that William Warburton, then in possession of a living at Brant Broughton, near Warwick, should also have been mentioned to the Queen, and, like Butler, put on the high way to promotion. She asked Bishop Hare if he could name some learned man fit to read and talk with her. The bishop spoke highly of the author of "The Alliance between Church and State"; and her Majesty signifying her approval of the nomination, he hoped soon to hear something further on the subject, a hope cut off by her sudden illness and speedy death.

CHAPTER IX.

1745–1760.

TIDINGS reached London in September, 1745, that Charles Edward Stuart had so far succeeded in his attempt to secure the British throne for his Father and depose the House of Hanover, that he had entered Edinburgh in triumph and taken possession of the Palace of Holyrood. He had ridden down the High Street on his charger, wearing the white cockade, had been rapturously received by a large number of citizens, and had proclaimed his Father King of Great Britain. The ecclesiastical consequences of success in this movement it is easy to guess. "Professing the Romanist religion, he might soon have been tempted to assail—at the very least he would have alarmed—a people jealous of their freedom, and a Church tenacious of her rights."[1] And in any case his reign must have proved a return of the Stuart type, for it could exist only by resting on the ruins of the Revolution of 1618. The religious excitement amongst certain classes in England at this juncture

[1] Stanhope's "History," vol. iii. p. 277.

was therefore intense ; and it increased in a few days when news of the Preston Pans victory arrived, and the story was told of the death of the brave Protestant, Colonel Gardiner. Higher it rose, wider and wider it spread, as the slow post brought to the metropolis intelligence of an advance on England, of the border being crossed, and of Carlisle being reduced. Then Charles Edward installed in the cathedral, as bishop of the see, a Romanist, named James Cappoch, afterwards hanged. From Carlisle the Pretender marched to Manchester, and thence to Derby. The excitement even then was not universal. "The most common feeling throughout England was indifference." [1] Multitudes, strange to say, did not much care about it one way or another. But with religious people it was otherwise. They took a side, a few for, almost all the rest against, the Pretender. Nonjurors and Jacobite Churchmen sympathized in the rebellion ; but on the part of moderate Tories, Whigs of different shades, loyal members of the Establishment, and the various Dissenting denominations, there were more or less zealous and earnest efforts to arrest the tide of invasion. Herring, Archbishop of York, zealously exerted himself in the support of his royal master. He gathered together volunteers by his persuasion, and raised a fund of £40,000 towards the public defence. Sermons on the duty of

[1] Stanhope, vol. iii. p. 271.

Protestants to stand by the Throne were preached and published. Pamphlets by clergymen during the former rebellion of 1715 were reprinted; and of course, when the struggle was over, and victory crowned the royal arms on the field of Culloden, churches echoed with thanksgiving. But amongst the supporters of the Government at that juncture, if not the most wealthy or the most numerous, Nonconformists were the most active.

In September, 1746, the Committee of the Deputies met and resolved that it be recommended to Protestant Dissenters to express their utmost zeal and readiness to join with any number of his Majesty's subjects in supporting his person and Government at this moment of danger in such manner as might prove most effectual.[1]

In Lancashire different sides were espoused according to political predilections. The Nonjurors came out boldly in support of Prince Charles. Three sons of the Nonjuring clergyman, Dr. Deacon, on their father's advice, and with his blessing, obtained commissions in the Pretender's army. Members of his congregation, along with Roman Catholics and some orthodox Churchmen, officered the Manchester regiment. One of the first enrolled was no other than the "Jemmy Dawson," immortalized in Shenstone's ballad. An Oxford clergyman, teacher in the Gram-

[1] "Sketch of the Hist. of the Deputies," p. 21.

mar Schools, dressed in canonicals, accompanied a drummer as he went through the town beating up recruits. The Prince was proclaimed in St. George's Square, and one of the chaplains of the Collegiate Church offered, in the presence of crowds lining Salford Street, solemn prayer for a Divine benediction on the enterprise.

On Sunday, March 30, there was a grand gathering in the Collegiate Church. The Manchester regiment marched thither under a banner inscribed with the motto, "Church and Country." The men wore blue, the officers Scotch tartan, all mounting the white cockade. Ladies in plaid ribbons, shawls, and mantles poured into the church. Charles occupied the warden's seat, and the Oxford clergyman preached from the words, "The Lord is King, let the earth be glad thereof." There were no counter-demonstrations on the part of Presbyterians; but in Liverpool a regiment was raised in defence of King George by the pastor of the Baptist Church in Byron Street.

The Manchester regiment soon broke up, having done no service; and the unfortunate clericals who threw themselves into the Stuart cause paid the penalty of rebellion at Carlisle and elsewhere. The heads of some were stuck on poles by the Manchester Exchange; and as long as they remained, Dr. Deacon raised his hat, and blessed God for the constancy of the sufferers, though his own son was of the number. This was denounced by a Presbyterian minister as

"false worship in the Christian sense, but true Non-juring and Jacobite devotion."

The rebellion suppressed, Manchester overflowed with delight; orange ribbons took the place of tartans and white cockades; and St. Anne's Church and Cross Street Meeting were now as brilliant in symbolical colours as the Collegiate Church had been before. Bells rang, bonfires blazed, and illuminations at night sparkled from the windows. When Dr. Deacon could not unite in the general joy, the heartless mob insisted upon his putting lights in his windows as other people did.[1]

Three years afterwards, 1748, when the nation had become quiet, and no one remained to trouble the House of Hanover, Dr. Gooch, the Bishop of Norwich, preached one day in his fine old cathedral, and said, "that the leaders of the rebellion were Presbyterians, as appeared by the conduct of those lords in the Tower, who, during their imprisonment there, sent for Presbyterian confessors." There happened to be present a celebrated Presbyterian minister, already noticed, Samuel Chandler. He was nettled at the allusion to Presbyterianism, inasmuch as Lord Lovat, one of the rebels who died on Tower Hill, was a Roman Catholic; and Balmerino appears to have died without making any profession of religion at all, but only shouting, "God save King James"; and that he

[1] Halley's "Lancashire," vol. ii. pp. 372 et seq.

would lay down, if he had them, a thousand lives in the same cause ; whilst, as to the third, Lord Kilmarnock, who was a Presbyterian,[1] he died confessing the heaviness of his crime. On returning to London, Chandler wrote to the Bishop on the subject, complaining of the unfairness of the charge, which led his lordship to return a civil answer, together with a friendly invitation, which the Dissenting minister accepted. As they were talking together, conversation ran out into the topic of Comprehension, agitated long before, but now for many years fallen asleep. Some little time afterwards a meeting followed between Chandler and the Bishop, accompanied by Sherlock of Salisbury. What Chandler said, we do not know ; but Sherlock is represented as remarking, "Our Church, Mr. Chandler, consists of three parts, doctrine, discipline, and ceremonies. As to the last, they should be left indifferent ; as to the second . . . ; and as to the first, what is your objection?" The substance of the reply appears to have been : "Your Articles must be expressed in Scripture words, and the Athanasian Creed be discarded." Upon which, as report goes, both Bishops rejoined, in words once used by Tillotson, they wished they were rid of it. They further professed that they had no objection to express the Articles in

[1] "Lord Kilmarnock is a Presbyterian."—Walpole's "Letters," vol. ii. p. 40.

Scripture phraseology. "But what could be done," they went on to ask, "about re-ordination?" "None of us," remarked Chandler, "would renounce his Presbyterian ordination; but if your Lordship means only to impose your hands upon us, and by that rite recommend us to public service in your society or constitution, that perhaps might be submitted to." The two Bishops, at the conclusion of the interview, requested Chandler to wait on Dr. Herring, who had by this time succeeded Potter in the primacy. This he did, and met once more with the Bishop of Norwich, when the Archbishop, finding Comprehension to be the subject under discussion, remarked, "A very good thing; he wished it with all his heart, and the rather because this was a time which called upon all good men to unite against infidelity and immorality, which threatened universal ruin; and added, he was encouraged to hope from the piety, moderation, and learning of many Dissenters, that this was a proper time to make the attempt." Upon hearing that, Chandler said he wished the Articles to be expressed in Scripture words, to which his Grace replied, "Why not? It is the impertinences of men thrusting their own words into Articles, instead of the words of God, which have occasioned much of the divisions in the Christian Church from the beginning to this day." He added, "the Bench of Bishops seemed to be of his mind; that he should be glad to see Mr. Chandler again, but was then obliged to go to Court." The

account of this conversation rests on the authority of the Dissenting minister who had so remarkable an interview with his Episcopalian friends. How the conversation was reported on the other side, we cannot tell; but the opinions of one or two of the three prelates mentioned, were certainly such as to lean in what would be called a liberal direction. Still, it is more than a little surprising, that bishops should go so far as the above report would indicate; and at all events Chandler was blamed for what he did. "Several persons," says another Dissenting divine who has preserved the report, "were angry with him for his conduct in this affair, especially for an expression he made use of, on his second visit, when, urging the expediency of expressing the Articles in Scripture language, he said, 'It was for others, not himself, he suggested this—his own conscience not being dissatisfied with them as they now stood, for he freely owned himself to be a moderate Calvinist.'"[1] What exactly excited such anger, whether the profession of his own opinion, or his allusion to the opinion of others, does not appear; but this appears, and it is worthy of observation, that anger did not proceed from any distinct objection to the idea of Comprehension altogether. Notwithstanding, there is no ground to suppose that a deep or widespread desire existed in Nonconformist circles upon the subject. Baxter and

[1] Wilson's "Dissenting Churches," vol. ii. p. 354.

Howe and Calamy, who longed for something of the sort, were gone; and the time for regathering Dissenters within the bosom of the Establishment had passed by, never to return.

But before leaving the subject, it may be observed that Chandler had some extraordinary ideas as to the result of relaxed subscription. He published, just at the time when the interview with the bishops took place, a work entitled, "The Case of Subscription to Explanatory Articles of Faith, as a Qualification for Admission into the Christian Ministry, calmly and impartially Reviewed." What he imagined from his measure of Church reform may be seen in the following passage:—

"The French Reformed Church is laid in ruins by that very imposing power which she herself too rigorously exerted. The Church of England still subsists, and I most sincerely pray that the good providence of God may ever protect her, and that none of the blemishes of that sister Protestant Church may be ever found in her. Rather let her excel in moderation, benevolence, charity to the consciences of men, desire of peace, and love of liberty. Let her, as becomes an affectionate mother, remove those subscriptions which create any difficulties to good men, and admit her ministers and members upon the terms laid down by Christ and His Apostles, and I could venture to foretell, that in a few years all would flow into her bosom, and gladly unite in her communion."[1]

[1] Chandler on "Subscription," p. 147.

While changes in the Establishment were sought by different persons, the policy of the Whig Minister was to keep things as they were. "*Do not stir what is at rest,*" was his politic motto. "Those at the head of affairs," said Warburton, "find it as much as they can do to govern things as they are, and they will never venture to set one part of the clergy against another; the consequence of which would be, that in the intrigues of political contests, one of the two parties would certainly fall in with the faction, if we must call it so, against the Court." [1]

Just about this time one of the last vestiges of mediæval times, in connection with Westminster Abbey, disappeared under Dean Wilcocks. The right of sanctuary had been a highly-prized privilege. A long and eloquent plea on behalf of its retention was urged by Abbot Feckenham, at the period of the Reformation. "All princes," said he, in the Upper House of Parliament, "all law-makers, Solon in Athens, Lycurgus in Lacedæmon, all have had *loca refugii*, places of succour and safeguard for such as have transgressed laws, and deserved corporal pains. Since, therefore, ye mean not to destroy all sanctuaries, and if your purpose be to maintain any, or if any be worthy to be continued, Westminster, of all others, is most worthy, and that for four causes: the first is, the antiquity and continuance of sanctuary

[1] Doddridge's "Correspondence," vol. v. p. 167.

there; the second, is the dignity of the person by whom it was ordained; the third, the worthiness of the place itself; the fourth, the profit and commodity that you have received thereby." The strange rights of sanctuary, though diminished in extent, lingered on after the Reformation; a refuge for debtors remained, and was upheld by Dean Goodman. James the First suppressed it; but the buildings of the Sanctuary were not finally removed until 1750; and even since, vestiges of it continued in the vice, crime, and filth which nestled over its site.[1] Westminster Hospital, with national and other schools and institutions in the neighbourhood, for the instruction of the ignorant and for the reformation of the abandoned, are infinitely better provisions for the mitigation of human evil and misery than ecclesiastical sanctuaries could have been in their best days.

Archbishop Potter died in 1747, when the primacy was offered, first to Dr. Sherlock, and then to Dr. Butler. The reason why the former refused it we are not informed; but the latter is reported to have done so on account of the condition of the Church, of which he took very gloomy views, and did not feel himself competent to meet the exigencies of the case. Herring, Archbishop of York, was the next person thought of for the vacant post, recommended as he

[1] Stanley's "Westminster Abbey," pp. 370, 543; Supplement, pp. 101, 173.

was by the loyalty he had manifested during the Rebellion. He accepted it. The ecclesiastical prospect must have appeared to him very different from what it did to his brother, for Dr. Herring wrote to a friend saying, "I think it happy that I am called up to this high station at a time when spite and rancour and narrowness of spirit are out of countenance, when we breathe the benign and comfortable air of liberty and toleration, and the teachers of our common religion make it their business to extend its essential influence, and join in supporting its true interest and honour." The tone of sentiment thus expressed is in accordance with the disposition attributed to the prelate; but it is supposed, by those who suspect him of latitudinarian opinions, to have proceeded, at least in a measure, from that cause. He occupied the chair of St. Augustine about ten years, and was then followed by Dr. Hutton, translated from York in 1757; the northern primacy being at that time, as it has been since, a high-road to the southern one. The new Archbishop, like his predecessor, is described as entertaining "very liberal notions on ecclesiastical affairs;" but what exhibits his character most decidedly in that respect is, that he was the patron and the friend of Archdeacon Blackburne, a zealous advocate for a relaxation in the terms of conformity. However, his influence after his elevation was very brief, as he died in 1758, and Dr. Secker then succeeded him in his duties,

prerogatives, and honours. Secker, like Butler, had studied in a Dissenting academy, and had there laid the foundation of his subsequent vast acquirements; but in the Episcopal course he pursued previous to his last translation in the Church, he had manifested, it is said, no such liberal or latitudinarian tendencies as some would have anticipated from his early training; on the contrary, he had manifested an orthodoxy and a strictness in admirable contrast, it was thought by some, with the character and career of certain other prelates, yet he continued on friendly terms with some Dissenters.[1] Unfavourable accounts are given of Secker; he was, according to Gilbert Wakefield, "an imperious and persecuting prelate."[2] "He preached sermons," says Horace Walpole, "which, what they wanted of Gospel, they made up for in a tone of fanaticism."[3] According to the Jacobite Dr. King, he was "insincere, of moderate parts, and a bad preacher."[4] These are prejudiced witnesses; and Walpole, after all his depreciation of Secker, is obliged to acknowledge his great popularity as a preacher.[5] If we may judge from a

[1] See Doddridge's "Correspondence," vol. i. p. 270.

[2] "Life of Wakefield," vol. i. p. 171.

[3] "Memoir of George II.," p. 65.

[4] "Anecdotes," p. 15.

[5] "It is incredible how popular he grew in his parish, and how much some of his former qualifications contributed to heighten his present doctrines."—Walpole's "Mem. of Geo. II.," vol. i. p. 57.

charge he delivered in 1758, he appears to have been an honest man, impressed by the responsibilities of his office :—

"If," he remarks, "we look upon what we are apt to call our livings only as our livelihoods, and think of little more than living on the income of them according to our own inclinations; if, for want of a good conscience and faith unfeigned, we forfeit the protection of God, and by worldliness, or indolence, or levity in behaviour, talk, or appearance (for gross vices I put out of the question) lose, as we assuredly shall, the reverence of mankind, there will be no foundation left for us to stand upon. Our legal establishment will shake and sink under us. Wicked people will attack us without reserve; the good will be found to condemn and give us up." [1]

Between the death of Queen Caroline and her husband George II.,—a space of twenty-three years,—numerous vacancies occurred in the English and Welsh sees. To specify them all, or even most of them, would be a wearisome and uninstructive task but a few may be selected of some importance.

London comes next to the two archbishoprics; and he who sits on the episcopal throne of St. Paul's cannot but exercise an influence beyond the limits of the metropolitan diocese. Sherlock presided over it from 1748 to 1761. He had been opposed to Hoadley in the famous Bangorian controversy, and it is said that

[1] "Works," vol. v. p. 444.

Hoadley dreaded him more than any other opponent,[1] for he was an eloquent speaker, and made impressive speeches in the House of Lords. His principal work is the "Trial of the Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus," a publication in reply to the attacks of Woolston on the miracles of Scripture, so popular that it speedily ran through fourteen editions. This method of defending Christianity may be taken as a key to his habits of thought and manner of teaching. We should further couple with such an insight into his mind the fact of his liberal and comprehensive spirit, as it appears in his conversation with Chandler, and his correspondence with Doddridge.[2]

Butler, we have seen, was recommended by the Queen to her husband for preferment, and was soon appointed to Bristol. In 1750, he was elevated to Durham, where he successfully resisted an attempt to rob the see of its splendour, by detaching from it the Lieutenancy of the County, and also maintained his position with a princely liberality which made him popular with all classes of people. "Three days a week, he entertained the principal gentry of the county and neighbourhood; and the clergy were always welcome guests at the palace." He delivered a rather famous *Durham Charge*, which was taken up and misrepresented by Archdeacon Blackburne. The

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[1] Perry, vol. iii. p. 302.

[2] "Correspondence," vol. v. p. 153.

tone of it, on the whole, may be pronounced judicious. Perhaps at that time, when there was little or no enthusiasm within the pale of the Establishment, no cautions were needed against introducing religious topics in common conversation—a practice which he condemned; but the "most weighty arguments in the pulpit against prevailing scepticism" were needed, and the employment of these he earnestly recommended. The point in the Charge which gave rise to misapprehension was the prominence given to "external religion," such as the renovation of Churches, no doubt much required at the time; and the more frequent holding of public services, a measure still more advisable. But the enforcement of purer and loftier piety is wanting; though in this Episcopal address are found exhortations to pastoral visits on the part of the clergy, and family devotion on the part of the people.

"During the short time he held the see, he conciliated all hearts. In advanced years and on the Episcopal throne he retained the same genuine modesty and native sweetness of disposition which had distinguished him in youth and in retirement. During the ministerial performance of the sacred office, a divine animation seemed to pervade his whole manner, and lighted up his pale, wan countenance, already marked with the progress of disease." [1]

In 1746 George Lavington, who had been a Canon

[1] Surtees, "Hist. of Durham."

at St. Paul's, was raised to the see of Exeter, where he became distinguished by his bitter animosity to Methodism, as appears in his discreditable book entitled "Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Baptists considered." Zachary Pearce was raised from the bishopric of Bangor and the deanery of Winchester, to the bishopric of Rochester and the deanery of Westminster, in 1756; and in his "Autobiography," written in the third person, we have ample particulars of the translation. It appears that he had wished to retire from the duties of office, and to spend his declining years in quietude; but the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Duke of Newcastle were averse to his doing so; the result was his removal to another sphere of high ecclesiastical responsibility. He was a man of ability and learning, and as Vicar of St. Martin's had attracted notice in the upper circles of society; even as early as 1737 he had become favourably known to Queen Caroline, consort of George II., respecting whom and himself he relates the following anecdote:—

"One day at that place, in the above-mentioned year, 1737, she asked him, if he had read the pamphlets published by Dr. Stebbing and Mr. Forster, upon the sort of heretics meant by St. Paul, whom, in Titus iii. 10, 11, he represents as self-condemned. 'Yes, madam,' replied the Doctor, 'I have read all the pamphlets written by them on both sides of the question.' 'Well,' said the Queen, 'which of the two do you think to be in the right?' The Doctor replied,

'I cannot say, madam, which of the two is in the right; but I think that both of them are in the wrong.' She smiled and said, 'Then what is your opinion of that text?' 'Madam,' said the Doctor, 'it would take up more time than your Majesty can spare at this Drawing-room for me to give my opinion, and the reasons of it; but if your Majesty should be pleased to lay your commands upon me, you shall know my sentiments of the matter in the next sermon which I shall have the honour to preach before his Majesty.' 'Pray do then,' said the Queen, and Dr. Pearce accordingly made a sermon on that text; but the Queen died in the November following, which was a month before his turn of preaching came about."[1]

A curious insight into the mysteries of bishop-making is caught in the autobiography of one who passed much of his life at Court. Dr. Rundle was proposed for the see of Gloucester by the Lord Chancellor. This aroused much opposition; and his Lordship was told, the Bishop of London would not consecrate his *protégé*. He replied, any other prelate might perform the office; but Sir Robert Walpole pointed out how this might bring the Royal prerogative into question. "According to this way of reasoning," the Lord Chancellor went on to urge, "the Bishop of London then must have a negative on every man the King ever nominated to a bishopric; and if this manner of arguing was to prevail, instead of the election made by a Dean and Chapter being

[1] "Lives of Pearce, Pocock," etc., vol. i. p. 387.

only a matter of form, the King's recommendation itself would become only a form, and the Bishop of London must give the King a *congé* to nominate, before the King could ever order a *congé d'élire*.[1] But the Bishop of London, Dr. Gibson, succeeded in his opposition, and the ground of it seems to have been some unguarded expressions used by Rundle relative to Abraham offering up his son Isaac. Rundle, instead of being made Bishop of Gloucester, was raised to the richer see of Derry: and Gibson, it is said, "ruined his own interest" by this act of interference.[2]

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[1] "Lord Hervey's Memoirs," vol. i. p. 452.

[2] Nichols's "Lit. History," vol. iii. pp. 478, 711.

CHAPTER X.

1727–1760.

THE Archæological vein of literature continued to be worked by English clergymen during the second generation of the eighteenth century. The industrious antiquary, Francis Peck, spent a busy life, first as a Northamptonshire curate, and next as a Leicestershire rector, in hunting up records, in collecting and translating MSS., and in writing Biographical and Critical Essays—yet not to the neglect of subjects pertaining to the Christian ministry; for he published four theological discourses, which, however, are now utterly forgotten. An equally well-known author of the same class was William Cole, of MSS. celebrity, whose papers, often consulted by students, are preserved in the British Museum, and whose odd-looking portrait in a white surplice is familiar to most old-fashioned book-hunters. First Rector of Hornsey, and next of Bletchley, he employed his time in collecting an enormous mass of historical materials which he never reduced to order; and it is said by a well-known critic, that, with strong Roman predilections, he combined a gossip's ear and a tatler's pen, and was,

on account of the flame and sputter of his strong prejudices, expressively nicknamed Cardinal Cole.[1] Another celebrity was Dr. Samuel Pegge, who lived nearly through the entire century. During the greater part of the thirty years now under review, he held a Kentish living, where he wrote memoirs for the *Archæologia*, and after much contention about some preferments in Derbyshire, which he never obtained, we find him inducted Vicar of Heath in the same county. There he followed up his antiquarian pursuits; yet "not entrusting his clerical duties to another until the failure of his eyesight rendered it necessary." Another well-known clerical student of a somewhat similar description, was Dr. Thomas Morell, Rector of Chiswick, Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries, editor of Greek plays and classical lexicons, and a friend of the artist, William Hogarth. Zachary Grey, Rector of Houghton Conquest, and Vicar of St. Peter's and St. Giles, Cambridge, may be added to the list, for a long series of publications issued from his pen, in which, with literary criticism, he united no little zeal in controversy against the Church of Rome and against the Protestant Dissenters. Other writers of a like order might be mentioned; but these suffice as specimens of incumbents who devoted their principal energies to literary rather than pulpit or parochial

[1] D'Israeli, "Calamities of Authors," vol. i. p. 237.

duties, though in several instances the latter were not neglected.[1]

Other literary divines of a different class appear in Edward Young and Laurence Sterne. They are generally thought of as authors; but they were also country clergymen in the reign of the Second George. At Welwyn, Hertfordshire, Young wrote his "Night Thoughts," after he lost his wife, Lady Betty Lee, also his step-daughter and her husband. We are not surprised to hear that he spent some hours every day in his churchyard; but it is strange to find it also stated, that he was fond of amusements, that he established a bowling green and an assembly in his parish, and that he felt very uneasy because he could not obtain better preferment. He applied to Archbishop Secker on the subject, who significantly reminded him that his fortune and reputation raised him above the need of advancement, and his sentiments above any great concern respecting it. At Sutton in the Forest of Galtrees, Yorkshire,—holding at the same time another living,—Sterne, as Prebendary of York, occupied a good position in the Church. In his rectory house he wrote "Tristram Shandy," and in the pulpit preached "The Sentimental Discourses." His literary renown is deservedly great, but he made no addition to the moral and spiritual

[1] Nichols's "Lit. Anecdotes," vol. vi. p. 224; vol. ix. p. 789; vol. ii. p. 532.

influence of the Church of England. The kindest tribute which can be paid to his personal memory, is to repeat over his grave his own words, "Alas, poor Yorick!"

Thomas Broughton, Reader at the Temple, Vicar of Bedminster, Bristol, author of several literary works; Conyers Middleton, the antagonist of Bentley, and the author of "The Free Inquiry concerning the Miraculous Powers of the Early Church;" and Arthur Sykes, Vicar of Godmaston, Kent, an auxiliary of Hoadley's, and the writer of a book on "The Innocency of Error," were men of repute in their day and generation. Another name may be mentioned—George England, Rector of Woollerton and Vicar of Hanworth, Norfolk, who composed an eccentric book, entitled "An Inquiry into the Morals of the Ancients" (1735). He endeavours to show in certain instances how much the Greeks and Romans rose above their system of religion, though he has to make some fatal admissions; with all this he couples illustrations of the gross inconsistency of modern Christians. His arguments are not worth much; but if his report of contemporary opinion be only in a measure true, it throws a melancholy light upon the character of the times.

"Religion is thought and spoken of as a device to deceive and subdue the minds of the vulgar, and as too gross an imposition to captivate the opinion or belief of

those of a higher rank ; the clergy are looked upon as a pack of crafty knaves, who have no other purport nor design in talking of piety, religion, and goodness, or in being careful of anything which concerns the Church and their order, than to procure power, wealth, and possessions to themselves." [1]

One more name may be added. Dr. Douglas, afterwards Bishop of Carlisle, won for himself considerable literary reputation by an Essay, defending Milton from the charge of plagiarism ; and, in a line with his clerical office and work, he entered the lists with David Hume in a book entitled " Criterion ; or, Miracles Examined " (1754). The ground of attack on Christianity had changed since the days of Toland, Shaftesbury, Collins, Woolston, and Tindal. Hume in his " Essay on Miracles," approached nearer to the modern standpoint of sceptical warfare. He argues against miracles as contrary to all experience ; as utterly unsupportable by historical evidence ; and as in themselves, if not absolutely impossible, yet very unlikely to be wrought by the Divine Being.[2] He puts various stories of miracles together, with the view of rendering them all alike incredible. The object of Douglas is stated on his title-page, " The Criterion ; or, Miracles Examined, with a View to Expose the Pretensions of Pagans and Papists, to Compare the Miraculous Powers recorded in the New

[1] " Inquiry," p. 281. [2] " Philosophical Essays," x.

Testament with those said to subsist in Latter Times; and to Show the Great and Material Difference between them in point of Evidence, from whence it will Appear that the Former must be True and the Latter may be False." The author occupies historical ground throughout, insisting on the difference between true and false marvels; and leaving the philosophical argument of natural impossibility which Hume had but slightly touched, to be handled by advocates of later date.

Undoubtedly the most illustrious clerical names in the republic of letters during the second generation of the century were some already mentioned; they require still further notice. If the reign of Queen Anne was the Augustan age of English literature in general, the reign of George the Second was the Augustan age of English theological literature in particular. I do not now speak of spiritual force, evangelical fervour, and such light, life, and love as must rise above mere intellectual and artistic influences; but simply of mental ability, the accumulation and distribution of learning, the cultivation of taste in the criticism of Scripture, and the employment of logical argument in the service of religion. In these respects, a period often unjustly depreciated stands pre-eminently distinguished. Take Warburton as illustrating the first point. Preacher of Lincoln's Inn, 1746; Dean of Bristol, 1757; Bishop of Gloucester, 1759; as he ascended the rounds of the

ecclesiastical ladder, if literary attainments are to be means of success, he certainly deserved what he won step by step. With some defects, which, like other men, for want of better training in his earlier days, he never overcame, he certainly mastered an amount of varied learning beyond most theological scholars; and whatever we may think of the value of the argument in his great work on "The Divine Legation of Moses," we must admire the immensity of his resources and the skill, adroitness, and effect with which he employs them. In spite of his love of paradox, we are constrained to do homage to his industry and his power. It is, perhaps, not too much to say of "The Divine Legation,"—

"To the composition of this prodigious performance Hooker and Stillingfleet could have contributed the erudition; Chillingworth and Locke the acuteness; Taylor, an imagination even more wild and copious; Swift, and perhaps Echard, the sarcastic vein of wit: but what power of understanding, excepting that of Warburton, could first have amassed all these materials, and then compacted them into a bulky and elaborate work, so consistent and harmonious?"[1]

"The Alliance" was written before "The Legation;" and though not equal to it in learning, it resembles the latter work in ingenuity and eloquence. Warburton places the Establishment upon a different

[1] "Quarterly Review," vol. vii.

basis from that chosen by the judicious Hooker; and nobody, however Erastian, would seriously adopt Warburton's line of argument; but, whatever may be thought of the force or the weakness of his reasonings, most persons who have perused the pages of this extraordinary Essay, are ready to acknowledge the originality and genius which it displays.

Waterland, Archdeacon of Middlesex in 1730; Newton, Incumbent of St. Mary's le Bow, Cheapside, 1744; and Jortin, a preacher in various places about London before he obtained the Vicarage of Kensington in 1762, are not to be placed on a level with Warburton; but the first was an acute reasoner, the second a learned expositor, and the third a sagacious critic, such as would do credit, in a literary point of view, to any Church at any period. Lowth occupies a niche of his own, and illustrates very strikingly what I have said about the cultivation of taste in the criticism of Scripture. As professor of poetry at Oxford, 1743, he delivered his *prelections*, which, if, for profound learning and robustness of treatment, surpassed by works of an earlier period, they, beyond all question, eclipse those which had preceded, in refinement of taste, purity of feeling, and elegance of diction.

But towering above his brethren in the employment of logical reasoning was Joseph Butler, whose appearance corresponded with the ideal of the man imagined by the reader of his works—of reverent

aspect, his face thin and pale, a divine placidness in his countenance, inspiring veneration, his white hair hanging gracefully over his shoulders, his whole figure patriarchal. As already intimated, he enjoyed the favour of Queen Caroline; and by her command he attended her usually in the evening, from seven to nine o'clock, for the purpose of conversing upon theological and philosophical subjects.[1] He spent twenty years in weighing objections against the reasonableness of Christianity, which in that sceptical age were circulated amongst all classes, from the Queen's drawing-room down to the London coffee house, and were also exhibited in publications of the day; the result he presented in his "Analogy," which probably preserves the arguments he employed in conversation with her Majesty. It appeals to those who are already Theists, not to avowed disbelievers in God, pleading that difficulties must be expected in Revelation as in Nature; that the denial of the Divine origin of one, logically leads to the denial of the Divine origin of the other; that the difficulties are conclusive in neither case, so that in the end the constitution and course of things satisfactorily support the religion of the Bible. The drift of the work is eloquently expressed by Southey, in the inscription he wrote for the Bishop's monument in Bristol Cathedral :—

[1] Bartlett's "Life of Butler," p. 42.

"Others had established the historical and prophetical grounds of the Christian religion, and that sure testimony of its truth, which is found in its perfect adaptation to the heart of man. It was reserved for him to develop its analogy to the constitution and course of nature; and laying his strong foundations in the depth of that great argument, there to construct another and irrefragable proof; thus rendering philosophy subservient to faith, and finding in outward and visible things the type and evidence of those within the veil."

These stirring words, open to exception in the estimation of some, will be cordially accepted by many others. The Pantheist and the Positivist—those who find in the depths of the universe only physical law and impersonal force, those who are under the power of unconquerable prejudices against the idea of anything supernatural—may ingeniously evade the application of Butler's arguments. But those who believe in a Divine Being, and are sorely tried by honest doubts touching the government of the world and the structure of the Bible, have ever found, and do still find, help, precious help, in the study of considerations such as are suggested by this inimitable Analogist. Whether or not many people have been reclaimed from decided unbelief by reading the "Analogy," it must be allowed as a fact beyond question, that multitudes have been strengthened in their faith, and in their victory over intellectual difficulties, by pondering the contents of this wonderful work—

wonderful it may be justly called on this, as well as on other accounts, that men of different schools, the Orthodox, the Evangelical, and the Latitudinarian, looking at nature and at the Scriptures from their own point of view, have expressed their deep obligations to Butler, and have vied with each other in praising his imperishable treatise. His sermons at the Rolls Chapel on "Human Nature" are scarcely less valuable than the "Analogy": they proceed on the same lines of reflection, and form a text-book on morals, which, putting aside schemes framed on the fitness of things and the expediency of virtue, seeks to build a sound ethical system on the study of human nature, according to its original constitution, as discoverable through consciousness and observation. Probably, after all that has been written and said on the subject since, these sermons proceed as far as it is possible for human thought to go, according to the guidance of enlightened reason.

This brief notice of an illustrious group shows how the sphere of Christian thought in the highest circles had, with few exceptions, narrowed down to the treatment of "evidences;" how the Evangelical cast of thought, conspicuous amongst the Puritans, had disappeared in the writings of great thinkers; how even the Trinitarian controversy, rife in the former generation had spent its force, at least in the Establishment; and how predominant had become the habit of appealing to reason in support of Revelation.

The proof of Christianity which Southey describes—"that sure testimony to its truth which is found in its perfect adaptation *to the heart of man*," its character as a redemptive remedy for all the ills of our fallen nature, were passed over with little notice. So that, whilst one gratefully acknowledges, not only the intellectual power and literary excellence of the writers mentioned, but also the service they rendered to the cause of religion, one cannot assign the highest place to their spiritual influence on the minds and the consciences of their fellow-men.

Amongst the pastors and preachers of the period, there are a few who require separate notice. Rarely has a man been found in the Church more earnest and devout, more pure in motive, more disinterested in aim, than Thomas Wilson, Bishop of Sodor and Man, who died in 1755. His "Sacra Privata" is a book which bears witness to his piety, and his "Memoirs" record his indefatigable labours. With a limited field of operation, he strove to cultivate every part of it; but failed, to a large extent, through the application of High Church discipline to people who had no spiritual sympathy with him whatever. Influenced by the best intentions, he endeavoured to extinguish immorality through the ecclesiastical punishment of offenders, and, as the result, he created prejudices and aroused opposition, after the manner of the Presbyterians of the English Commonwealth. Unlike as his theory was to theirs, it produced similar effects.

John Clayton and James Hervey were also clergymen of eminent character and of exemplary self-consecration. They had been students together in Oxford at the commencement of the period, but, after leaving the University, pursued different paths of teaching and worship. The former was an incumbent at Manchester during the Rebellion of 1745, and manifested unmistakably strong Jacobite convictions. Like Wilson, he had faith in the power of penal coercion to cure vice and crime, and like him he held High Church views of sacraments and of service; but, withal, he manifested something of the Methodistic fervour which he had caught in his student days, and could preach sermons so as to win the approval of hearers imbued with "Evangelical" sentiments. His fellow-student was different from him in all but his spiritual ardour. A Low Churchman, a thorough Calvinist, Hervey preached, as to the substance of his discourses, in the manner of the Puritans; but the style of his "Meditations" and of "Theron and Aspasio" would not have secured the approbation of Richard Baxter or of John Howe. With no depth of theological thought, he was florid in the extreme; nevertheless there rested an unction on his ministry which attracted crowds to the village church of Weston Favell, where, to the day of his death, in 1758, he excited the affections of his hearers, by pointing them to Christ as the Saviour of the world. To the last he continued to preach with acceptance and

success; and it is reported of him that, enfeebled by consumption, he persevered in his employment, lifting up hands so wasted by disease that sunlight from the church windows shone through the attenuated palms.[1] Samuel Walker, of Truro,—an Oxford man, well known for Evangelical opinions, an awakening ministry, and great ministerial success;—also Thomas Adams, Rector of Wintringham,—the author of a popular work entitled "Private Thoughts," stamped with the same character as distinguished Walker's preaching,—belonged to the second generation of the eighteenth century.

Other clergymen, less pronounced, perhaps, in their opinions, "were endued with a restless activity, and preached in various churches and private rooms, in the Metropolis, in Bristol, and in other places, without identifying themselves with the great Nonconformist denominations," hereafter to be described, "and without indicating any sympathy with the old Dissent."[2] Moreover, we read of parish ministers thoroughly devoted to their work,—such as Hildesly, Vicar of Hitchin, afterwards Rector of Holwell, and finally Bishop of Sodor and Man, on Wilson's death, in 1755, who, when his income did not admit of keeping a curate, threw his whole soul into pastoral work; and Law, who held a Cumberland living, became Archdeacon of Carlisle in 1743,

[1] A local tradition. [2] Watson's "Life of Wesley," p. 72.

on his way to a Bishopric, and who combined with clerical diligence and study a warm attachment to the cause of civil and ecclesiastical liberty. A numerous class, especially in the rural districts, was composed of those who, with genial good nature and benevolent affections, united coarseness of manners, not to say thorough vulgarity. They perhaps caught the tone of some neighbouring country squires, such as are familiar to us through sketches of character and life drawn at that period. Their generosity, friendliness, and bravery were regarded by themselves and others as making atonement for what they deemed superficial infirmities incident to human nature. Far from being unpopular, their benevolence won the affections of their rustic flocks, and their simplicity the admiration of polite society. They hated Rome, and they hated Geneva; the latter perhaps more than the first. Papists, in their estimation, were idolaters; and Puritans were hypocrites. Certain doctrines taught in common by the Reformers and later divines in the English Church, were caricatured and denounced, especially the doctrine of Justification by Faith, which was represented as a doctrine *against* good works. Miracles were appealed to as the seals of Christianity in the first century; but the work of the Holy Spirit on the souls of men in the eighteenth, was pronounced an idle dream.

Learning, and ability would, in some cases, adorn sermons pitched in a key of this kind; but they

would often be dull and drowsy, like those of the disreputable Churchill, in St. John's, Westminster — where he became curate in 1758—

> "I kept those sheep
> Which for my curse I was ordained to keep,
> Ordained, alas! to keep through need, not choice;
> While, sacred dulness ever in my view,
> Sleep at my bidding crept from pew to pew."

Two volumes of Discourses, some preached in St. Paul's and some at Oxford, by Jeremiah Seed, attained great popularity in 1751, and passed through four editions. They are specimens of such pulpit addresses as were at that period most approved. Fluent in language, stiff and artificial in manner, sometimes agreeable in illustration, always clear, intelligible, and neatly arranged, they treat of such duties as the Love of Enemies, Domestic Affection, Unreserved Obedience, the Government of the Thoughts, Moderation in Amusements, Prayer, Resignation, and the Love of God; these points are enforced chiefly on the ground of the reasonableness on which they rest, and the advantages which they secure. To a sense of propriety, to the perception of utility in the minds of the congregation, well-written sermons of this order were addressed; but of the higher motives presented in the Gospel, little is said. Reason is described as that Sun, which God has lighted up to dispel the mists and fogs of vice.

"Virtue must be built upon interest, (*i.e.*) our interest upon the whole."[1]

A curious glimpse of a provincial church and its local customs, is afforded in the following passage from a History of Yarmouth. Every Sunday morning it was customary for the Mayor to receive the members of the Corporation in the Town Hall; and then, wearing his robe and chain, and preceded by the insignia of his office, he went in procession to St. Nicholas Church, where special seats were provided, that for the Mayor, at the south-east corner of the south aisle, being on a level with the pulpit. At the conclusion of the service, the officiating minister turned and bowed to his worship, who, having bowed in return, left as he had entered, only not stopping at the Guildhall, but going home to his own residence, where on "scarlet days," those who accompanied him were entertained with what is called a "whet."[2] In country villages, where no exemplary ministers were found, where the rector or curate lived a free and easy life, and liked to drink "a dish of tea with the landlady, and afterwards a bowl of punch with the landlord of the inn," not much attention would be paid either to spiritual necessities or to the decencies of religious service. Buildings were neglected; chancel and nave fell into decay; the Communion

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[1] "Seed's Sermons," vol. i. pp. 193, 411.

[2] "The Perlustration of Great Yarmouth," vol. i. p. 75.

table presented a shabby appearance ; surplices were dirty ; the singing was miserable ; the preaching no better ; and, from beginning to end, everything presented a slovenly aspect.

The moral character of some of the clergy was no better than their material surroundings. Instances of profligacy are on record. Drunkenness was not unknown, even in the House of God ; and shameful immoralities of other kinds were, on sufficient grounds, attributed to clerical incumbents. I do not care to give examples. The number of such cases cannot be ascertained, and therefore no just conclusion can be reached as to the proportion which they bore to those of a different description. No doubt exaggeration is common with reference to subjects of this kind. Disgraceful anecdotes may suggest sweeping generalizations, unjust to the age with which they are associated. But, however judgment may lean on the side of charity, enough is undeniable to produce a disagreeable impression relative to a number of persons in holy orders, during the second generation embraced in this history.

One scandal ought to be noticed. The marriage law was in a miserable state, and weddings were celebrated in wretched places, under wretched circumstances. Hand-bills were circulated, announcing that at the old Red Hand and Mitre, three doors from Fleet Lane, and next door to the White Swan, marriages could be performed by "the Reverend Mr.

Symson, educated at the University of Cambridge, and late chaplain to the Earl of Rothes." Wedding rites, with a licence certificate and a crown stamp, "at the new Chapel next door to the china shop, near Fleet Bridge," were offered at the price of one guinea. Scenes ensued such as beggar description. Horrible deceptions were practised, and the most loathsome immoralities encouraged. Lumbering coaches drove up, containing fashionably dressed women, who were met by men in clerical costume, offering to tie the nuptial bond. Some of these worthless creatures, it may be presumed, were only in *pretended* holy orders, taking the words in the worst sense; but it is perfectly certain, that others had been regularly ordained, and one who reached more than common infamy, was excommunicated in 1742, and died in the Fleet prison in 1758. High-minded men mourned over this state of things, and condemned the clergy who officiated on such occasions; but it is melancholy to know, that some from whom better things might have been expected, connived at these practices, and that not a few rather laughed at the ludicrousness of the circumstances, than frowned on the iniquity of the crime.

A marked characteristic of the age must not be passed over. Since a strong faith in spiritual things had come to be viewed as fanatical, all faith in revelation was by many treated as visionary. Who

can doubt the truth of Bishop Butler's oft cited words ?[1]

"It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject for inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it as if in the present age, this were an agreed point among all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world."

Archbishop Secker speaks to the same effect.

"In this we cannot be mistaken, that an open and professed disregard to religion is become, through a variety of unhappy causes the distinguishing character of the present age; that this evil is grown to a great height in the metropolis of the nation; is daily spreading through every part of it; and bad in itself as any can be, must of necessity bring in all others after it. Indeed it hath already brought in such dissoluteness and contempt of principle in the higher part of the world, and such profligate intemperance, and fearlessness of committing crimes in the lower, as must, if this torrent of iniquity stop not, become absolutely fatal." "Regard to piety is strangely lost even among persons that are otherwise tolerably serious. Many have laid aside all appearances of it."[2]

This is not ignorant and prejudiced declamation.

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[1] Advertisement to the first edition of the "Analogy," 1736.
[2] "Eight Charges." Edit. 1790, p. 4.

The statements made are painfully supported by the history of society, by plays, novels, correspondence, biographies, and anecdotes of the age.

Here we are compelled to remark that the National Church, with all its resources, had failed to purify the atmosphere of the country. Some may have asked for more than could fairly be expected at its hands. But no one, however moderate his expectations of ecclesiastical efficiency, can maintain that the Church, after so long an existence, had fairly fulfilled its office. Statistics of immorality have been given in reference to the first thirty years of the century. Similar statistics are at hand in relation to the second. The Church stood in the midst of a population including a multitude of virtuous men and women. It could number not a few amongst clergy and laity who served their generation according to the will of God. But a much larger mass remained in a state of moral degradation or spiritual insensibility :—moral degradation, inasmuch as multitudes were addicted to habits of vice, and spiritual insensibility, inasmuch as greater multitudes, though not practising the same vices, had no keenness of sensibility in relation to the subject. Public opinion then was not such as, happily, public opinion has since become. That which would now be scouted as intolerable was treated then to a large extent with levity or indifference. Much of the literature of the day, even when on the side of what is right, described vice, or alluded

to it, after a manner which betrayed a distressing want of delicate feeling and refined taste. No one can read the fictions of the age, however he may admire the genius and moral intention of the authors, without being shocked at the repulsiveness of scenes described, the coarseness of details given. Of course, it is not meant that the Church was responsible for all the literature produced; but the Church, as the spiritual instructor of the nation, must be held responsible, to a certain extent, for the moral atmosphere in the midst of which it lived and moved. Responsibilities cannot be separated from the possession of power. Great power has been claimed for the Establishment of this country. The status it occupies has been supported on the ground of the strength which it gives to its ministers, and the means of usefulness it can set in motion. Accordingly, when we apply that principle to its history, a century or more ago, we inquire after the effects produced by it on the spiritual and moral condition of the people. Looking at the subject, not from a sectarian point of view, but as it may be fairly regarded by Churchmen, we cannot help reaching an unfavourable conclusion. One who believed firmly in the principle of an Establishment, and admired the parochial system spread over the country, might in the last century have used the words uttered by an illustrious Scotch divine on his visiting the University of Oxford thirty years ago. "You

have the best machinery in the world, and you know not how to use it." [1]

All the good which the Church did in many ways has been anxiously and carefully set down in the foregoing pages. On the other hand, it is only righteous to take account of what it might, but did not, accomplish. If on studying the memoirs of clergymen, and the sermons they preached, we discovered a high tone of spiritual feeling—an agony of sorrow over rampant iniquity, like that which forced tears from the eyes of Hebrew prophets, and a devotedness and self-sacrifice in seeking the salvation of men and purifying the air of society—then indeed it would be unjust and cruel to lay at the Church's door responsibility for surrounding evils. But with an admission of the ability and learning exhibited by some, and of the zeal and activity exhibited by others —also with an admission of the pointed reproofs administered by a few—it cannot be said of the clergy *in general*, that they really met, faced, and fought against what was bad in their day and generation. It is painful to turn over the biographies of some leading Churchmen of the period, and to find that, with all their love of learning, and all their industry in exhibiting "Evidences," and in illustrating the "Reasonableness of Christianity," their letters, their conversation, and other conduct exhibit, as a leading

[1] Stanley's "Church of Scotland," p. 153.

passion, the love of preferment, the watching for a stall, the hope of a Deanery, or the desire of a Diocese. Turning from books written by such men, to some others, noticed hereafter, is certainly to exchange worlds; it is to pass from a cold dry atmosphere, as on a moonlight night, to one filled with warmth and life as on a summer's noon. Some will say that enthusiasm in the latter case filled the air—that the spirit abroad became fanatical. Let this for a moment be allowed, still there arose an earnestness, a zeal, a self-devotedness, an all-absorbing consecration, which had in it, so far, a divinity and a truthfulness sufficient to redeem it from disgrace. Can it be believed that if the Church had been alive to its great mission, and thrown into it the force and fire which we shall hereafter have to witness, that the state of English society would have been what it was in 1750?

Though the deficiencies of the Establishment here alone come under our survey, because to the Establishment our attention at present is confined, the deficiencies of Nonconformity in reference to the wants of the nation must not be overlooked. The state of religion amongst the Dissenting bodies will be examined in a subsequent part of this history; but in the meantime, it must be admitted, that, with certain exceptions to be pointed out, a spirit of indifference respecting the masses of the people infected the respectable congregations gathered within the walls of Protestant meeting-houses.

Yet, bad as things were in England altogether, they were not so bad as they might have been. It is only necessary to look across the Channel to see this very plainly. The state of France was much worse than the state of England. Religion under Queen Anne and the Georges will bear comparison with religion under Louis XIV. and his successors. The English Revolution of 1688 had saved this country from the miseries entailed by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. The best Protestant blood had been drained off the French coasts, but Protestant blood, purified in many ways, flowed freely through the veins of the body social and political on this side the Straits of Dover.

Religious liberty, to an extent which appeared enviable in the eyes of the descendants of the Huguenots, existed here. The superstitions of Romanism, in spite of Gallican liberties, domineered over the lives and habits of most Frenchmen religiously disposed. But Romanism in Great Britain was held in check during the last century, though by means which we are constrained to disapprove. Infidelity was, after all, not so rampant amongst our fathers as amongst their foreign contemporaries: a God-defying spirit, of the French type, had not laid hold on the lower orders; some reverence for divine things happily lingered, upon which Methodism successfully laid hold; and whatever instances of immorality might exist in the Church, the luxury, dissipation, and vice

of the upper class of the French clergy found no counterpart in the lives of English dignitaries in general.

The annals of the University of Cambridge, from 1730 to 1760, are very uninteresting, and shed no light on the religious history of the times. But an important movement at Oxford coming within the limits of this chapter, is inseparably connected with the ecclesiastical history of England. Cambridge in the seventeenth century played a leading part in the Puritan struggle then going on. It perpetuated and revived a tone of "evangelical" thought and feeling which had been received from earlier times. Afterwards it proved the nursery for a different form of teaching, philosophical and "latitudinarian," which gained and kept a steady grasp on the minds of cultivated divines through a long portion of the next century. In that century, Oxford took the lead in the guidance of religious thoughtfulness, and did so in quite a new and original way. Oxford under Owen had done much to promote Puritan divinity in England; after the Restoration it lapsed into a state of theological inactivity, amidst which came occasional outbreaks of intolerance and despotism on the one hand, and the assertion of liberty and independence on the other: the removal from the Christ Church list of Locke, and the resistance of Hough, President of Magdalen, can never be forgotten. Yet a wonderful revival of religious feeling awaited, not the

University at large, but a few young men in two or three Colleges, about the year 1727. This revival originated not with the authorities, not with any members distinguished at the time, but with certain students, obscure and unknown, but destined to win a world-wide fame. It is interesting to trace the gradual progress of the new impulse. A Lincoln man, John Wesley, who was to take the lead in much that followed, wrote to his brother in 1726,—

"As far as I have ever observed, I never knew a College besides ours, whereof the members were so perfectly satisfied with one another, and so inoffensive to the other part of the University. All I have yet seen of the fellows are both well natured and well bred, men admirably disposed, as well to preserve peace and good neighbourhood among themselves, as to promote it wherever else they have any acquaintance." Speaking of the same year, the same writer remarks, "I saw no reason to think the greater part of these truly loved or feared God. Such acquaintance therefore I did not choose. . . . When they came a few times and found I still declined returning the visit, I saw them no more. . . . I knew many reflections would follow, but that did not move me, as I knew full well it was my calling to go through evil report and good report."[1]

A select company was thus formed, knit together by close ties of religious sympathy. The company were in derision called "Sacramentarians," "Bible

[1] Quoted in Southey's "Life of Wesley," vol. i. pp. 24, 26.

Bigots," "Bible Moths," "The Godly Club." The father of him who was the leading spirit in this unique party wrote in a letter, "I hear my son John has the honour of being styled the Father of 'the Holy Club': if it be so, I am sure I must be the grandfather of it, and I need not say that I had rather any of my sons should be so dignified and distinguished than to have the title of His Holiness."[1] A young man named Morgan, who joined this band, addicted himself to fasting and privation; and this, working upon a delicate constitution, probably hastened his death—which of course served to increase the disrepute of the society. Another student, the celebrated Whitefield, who came to Oxford at the time, hearing of the young men who "lived by rule and method," was drawn toward them, and defended them from the revilings of opponents:—[2]

"And when he saw them go through a ridiculing crowd to receive the Sacrament at St. Mary's, he was strongly inclined to follow their example." "They were now about fifteen in number. When first they began to meet, they read divinity on Sunday evenings only, and pursued their classical studies on other nights; but religion soon became the sole business of their meetings: they now regularly visited the prisoners and the sick, communicated once a week, and fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays, the stationary days

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[1] Southey's "Life of Wesley," vol. i. p. 30. [2] Ibid. pp. 33, 34.

of the ancient Church, which were thus set apart because on those days our Saviour had been betrayed and crucified. They also drew up a scheme of self-examination, to assist themselves by means of prayer and meditation in attaining simplicity and the love of God."

Such conferences were novelties at Oxford; but they strongly resembled the associations for instruction and prayer held in London under the auspices of Dr. Horneck and others. The Bishop of Oxford sanctioned the visitation of the prisoners; but the seniors of Christ Church considered it an outbreak of fanaticism, and consulted as to the method of checking it. It was reported that the Dean and the Censors were going to blow up the Godly Club. When John Wesley's brother Samuel heard this, he said he did not like that they should be—

"Called a club, for that name was really calculated to do mischief; but the charge of enthusiasm could weigh with none but such as drink away their senses, or never had any; for surely activity in social duties, and a strict attendance on the ordained means of grace, are the strongest guards imaginable against it."

This brother—a hard-headed man—did not approve of certain practices by his brother, such as refusing to have his hair dressed according to the prevalent fashion, that he might give to the poor the money which he in this way saved. Various causes, especially the odium of singularity, and the consequence of over-

fasting, now thinned the fellowship, and by 1734 the numbers dwindled from seven-and-twenty down to five.

They were all High Churchmen, and had no sympathy whatever with Nonconformists; apostolical succession they believed to be essential to the Christian ministry, and they held that none had authority to administer sacraments, except men episcopally ordained. In the meetings of the Oxford association we undoubtedly discover the *cradle of Methodism;* but there were members who had little or no sympathy with forms of doctrine, effort, and organization which grew out of this rudimentary origin.

Clayton became a Jacobite. Benjamin Ingham, another of the band, joined the Moravians; so did John Gambold. Thomas Broughton, another of the number, we find acting for years as Secretary to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Charles Kinchen, also a member, maintained the position of an established clergyman at Dummer, where he was indefatigable in his parish, and admitted John Wesley to his pulpit; James Hervey, remained entirely unconnected with Methodism, as it respects both doctrinal and ecclesiastical principles.[1]

The decline of the Nonjuring sect in England does not require more than a few sentences. Some of

[1] The lives of these men are included in Tyerman's "Oxford Methodists." More will be said of them hereafter.

its brightest lights were extinguished about 1730. Dr. Jenkin, chaplain to Bishop Lake, died a little before that time. Henry Gaudy, who caught Spinke's mantle, as opponent of "the usages," expired soon afterwards. So did Samuel Parker, son of the Oxford Bishop; a little later died the eccentric Nonjuring antiquary, Herne, who, though he would not support the Pretender, could not swear allegiance to the Georges. The Rebellion of 1745 galvanized the Nonjuring body; and we have seen one of its members at Manchester taking a leading place amongst the followers of Charles Edward; but the effect died away after the firm establishment of the Hanoverian House, and what remains of the history of the Nonjurors may be summed up in divisions and deaths. With that tendency to internal strife which is often found in parties on the point of extinction, the Nonjurors quarrelled on the subject of Lay Baptism. The quarrel began as early as 1733, and it continued for some time afterwards. The Regular Body, as it was called, admitted the validity of baptism by lay persons; but Campbell and Lawrence opposed that view, and became leaders of a new division; yet, whilst thus breaking up into separate fragments, one bond of union remained, *i.e.*, intense dislike to the Established Church. A volume of letters, published after the Rebellion, indicates that, if possible, at that time, the dislike had became more intense than ever. Even "heresy," "schism," and "immoral worship" were

alleged against all "complying clergy."[1] With characteristic perverseness, some of these separatists objected to the change in the calendar. In "The Happy Interview," by one of them, named Lindsay, Truth and Common Sense are described as meeting at St. Paul's on the second of September, set apart as a fast in memory of the fire of London.

"'Tis strange,' says Truth, 'that Common Sense should not reflect upon the notorious absurdity of addressing our prayers in solemn commemoration of an event, as happening on this day, whereas the proper anniversary appointed by authority is yet to come eleven days hence, and will then be passed over here without any notice.' Truth declares, 'How absurd it is to celebrate this, and the other three anniversaries of the Martyrdom, the Restoration, and the Gunpowder Treason (which are all four solemnities peculiar to this nation) on the nominal days instead of the real ones.' Common Sense is at last convinced that the people are deceived by almanacks and calendars."[2]

Carte, Law, and Lindsay bring up the rear of Nonjuring celebrities. The first is well known as author of a "Life of the Duke of Ormond," and of a "History of England"; getting into trouble just before the Rebellion, he was asked by the Duke of Newcastle whether he was a bishop; "No, my Lord," he replied, "there are no bishops in England, but

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[1] Lathbury's "Nonjurors," p. 396. [2] Ibid. p. 400.

what are made by your Grace; I am sure I have no reason to expect that honour." He died in 1754. William Law lived till 1761, having taken part on the High Church side in the Bangorian controversy. Losing his fellowship at Cambridge through a refusal of the abjuration oath under George I., he lived in privacy, attending Divine service in his parish church, and not identifying himself with any separatist movement. It is curious to find him for some time residing at Putney, in the family of Gibbon the Historian, who could have no sympathy with him in religious opinion, but to whom we are indebted for some account of his life in the Historian's autobiography. Law was a Mystic, a great admirer of Jacob Behmen, whose influence gave a tinge to a most popular religious book written by the Nonjuror. His "Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life" must have in it some considerable spiritual power, seeing that it deeply moved the mind of John Wesley in an early stage of his experience, and so impressed Dr. Johnson, that he said it was the first book which made him in earnest about religion. Lindsay ministered to a Nonjuring congregation at Trinity Chapel, Aldersgate Street, acting at the same time as corrector of the press to Bowyer the printer, who belonged to the Nonjuring denomination. In 1747 he wrote to a friend, saying: "I removed last Christmas from the Temple, and took a lodging in Pear-tree Street, near St. Luke's, Old Street, where I spend my time chiefly among books or in my gar-

den." He died in 1768, aged eighty-two; and there is something pathetic in the picture of the conscientious old man, alone on the edge of the Great Babylon, reading divinity, and watching his flower-beds.

CHAPTER XI.

1702–1760.

HAVING brought down the history of the Episcopal Church in England to the close of the reign of George II., the period we have reached seems an appropriate point at which to pause, and disentangle from other circumstances a thread of ecclesiastical enterprise which hitherto I have been unable to gather up and unwind. I allude to what was done under Queen Anne and the first two Georges, by Episcopalians at home, with a view to the diffusion of Christianity abroad. To follow at any length such work as was accomplished by them in foreign countries, would be out of place in volumes upon religion in England ; but it is necessary to glance at proceedings conducted in this kingdom, out of which the work at a distance took its rise, and also to indicate the objects which inspired the sympathies of the Church in our own country. A brief review of the subject from 1702 to 1760 will add some additional illustrations of our main historical theme.

The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge as early as 1709 took an interest in the spiritual condition of the East, and rendered assistance to the

Danish Mission in Tranquebar and other places. Plutscho and Ziegenbalg, two laborious agents, visited England to strengthen the sympathy with them, awakened by the report of their adventures and their toils; and in 1715 the latter of these worthies,—a man of most distinguished zeal and constancy,—was welcomed at a general meeting by a Latin address, to which he responded in "*a Malabaric speech*," interpreted by the Secretary. Archbishop Wake evinced a regard for this remarkable man and his companion, John Ernest Grundler, in a letter containing rather impassioned language.

"Let others," he says, "indulge in a ministry, if not idle, certainly less laborious among Christians at home. Let them enjoy in the bosom of the Church titles and honours obtained without labour and without danger. Your praise it will be (a praise of endless duration on earth, and followed by a just recompense in heaven), to have laboured in the vineyard which you yourselves have planted, to have declared the name of Christ where it was not known before, and, through much peril and difficulty, to have converted to the faith those among whom ye afterwards fulfilled your ministry. Your province, therefore, brethren, your office, I place before all dignities in the Church. Let others be pontiffs, patriarchs, or popes; let them glitter in purple, in scarlet, or in gold; let them seek the admiration of the wondering multitude, and receive obeisance on the bended knee. Ye have acquired a better name than they, and a more sacred fame."[1]

[1] Anderson's "History of the Colonial Church," vol. iii. p. 12.

When, in 1724, three more missionaries, destined for Indian service, visited this country, they were received, not only by the members of the Society and the Primate, but by the Sovereign, who, at an audience, made inquiries respecting their future duties, and bestowed upon them a handsome present. Schulze, another name worthy of honour, carried on the work which Francke pursued too short a time,—for he died in early life ;—and then in the course of a few years, in 1749, no less a celebrity than Christian Frederic Schwartz, reached England, on his way to India, in connection with the Danish Mission, to receive here the benedictions of the Christian Knowledge Society, through its officers and friends.[1]

But missions abroad more properly belonged to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, an Institution which sprung out of the elder one just noticed. William the Third incorporated the Society by a charter in 1701, appointing the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishops of London and Ely, the Lord Almoner, the Deans of Westminster and St. Paul's, the Archdeacon of London, and the Regius and Margaret Professors of Divinity at Oxford and Cambridge for the time being, together with many others, laymen as well as clergy-

[1] A Hebrew Bible belonging to Schwartz, with his autograph and the chair in which he was accustomed to sit, are preserved at the office of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

men, trustees of the funds and property which the Society might possess, thus stamping it with a Church of England character; the selection of some of the dignitaries at first being, perhaps, determined on personal grounds. They had power given them to confer together, to use a common seal, to elect officers, to frame bye-laws, to collect subscriptions, and generally to conduct affairs. A president with vice-presidents and other necessary officers were to be elected yearly at some convenient place, "between the hours of eight and twelve in the morning," and meetings accordingly were held for transacting business at different places chosen for the purpose. At one time the Cockpit in Whitehall—occupying the site of the present Privy Council Office, then crowded round by buildings—was the place of assembling; and thither went the rulers of the Church, with distinguished laymen, through narrow streets and under Holbein's gateway, to listen to the reading of minutes, to hear reports of foreign proceedings, and to vote on important questions. At another time we see them walking eastwards, up Ludgate Hill to the chapter house of St. Paul's, or through old Cheapside, to the vestry of Bow Church; and at a later period they are found winding towards the aristocratic neighbourhood of St. Martin in the Fields, to confer and decide on various matters in Archbishop Tenison's Library. There were read on such occasions letters of application on behalf of English colonists and also various

Indian tribes. Moreover, letters came to hand touching English factories in Europe, at Moscow, and Amsterdam.

In 1703 it was reported that five Sachems, or kings of the Iroquois, promised Lord Cornbury, at a conference in Albany, that they would be obedient to the faith of Christ; that they were "glad to hear the sun shined in England since king William's death;" that they wondered the English should have a *Squa Sachem*,—a woman king,—but they "hoped she would be a good mother and send them some to teach them religion as well as traffic," and that they sent presents and made a "covenant so sure that thunder and lightning should not break it on their parts." [1]

The Society appealed for assistance to the nobility and gentry, to "ministers of extraordinary qualifications," and to merchants and rich traders, who had "reaped their temporal things plentifully by the labours and pains of those poor ignorant or misled creatures." These exhortations conclude with the remark, "It is not to be expected that many should rise up to the example of an unknown lady, who has cast in lately £1000 into the treasury of this Society; but he doeth acceptably who gives according to his ability."

Very soon deputations were sent into the country to

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[1] The report is printed in the Appendix to "Anderson's Colonial Church," vol. iii. p. 584.

stir up the benevolence of Churchmen. Lincolnshire was more zealous than any other county ; and special mention is made of help received from the Bishop of the diocese, Dr. Gardner. Devonshire also is mentioned as being animated by a missionary spirit. Wales, too, appears to have been distinguished amongst the Society's supporters. Endowments of land were bestowed, and annual subscriptions, some of large amount, were contributed. The Archbishop of Canterbury gave fifty pounds a year ; the Bishops of London, Salisbury, Hereford, and Ely, twenty-five pounds each. Several names appear as annual subscribers of ten pounds. Sir John Charden, the traveller, who applied his knowledge of the East to the elucidation of Scripture—whose grave is at Chiswick, and his monument in Westminster Abbey—liberally supported the Society, and gave to it just before his death no less a sum than £1000. Bray, Evelyn, Bishop Beveridge, and Dean Prideaux are numbered amongst its earliest friends and helpers.

In one of the annual sermons preached on behalf of the Society, Kennet, in 1712—at that time Dean of Peterborough, another prominent benefactor—dwelt upon "the letts and impediments in planting the Gospel of Christ."[1] The preacher, in an epistle, dated

[1] All the annual sermons were printed, and a complete collection of them is preserved in the office of the S.P.G. The Rev. Josiah Pratt published some interesting extracts of them in a work entitled, "Propaganda," 1820.

1716, to a correspondent at Boston, makes a statement which illustrates the subject of his missionary discourse, and shows the difficulties with which he and other good men had to contend, notwithstanding the care which seems to have been taken by the Propagation Society to send out fitting agents.[1]

"The two great difficulties," he says, "that still lie hard upon our Society for Propagation of the Gospel, are the want of sober and religious missionaries, few offering themselves to that service for the glory of God and the good of souls, but chiefly to find a refuge from poverty and scandal. Such men, when they come to the places allotted to them, forget their mission, and instead of propagating Christianity, are only contending for rites and ceremonies, or for powers and privileges, and are disputing with the vestries of every parish, and even with the civil government of every province. The two mischiefs can hardly be redressed but by fixing schools and universities in those parts, and settling we hope, two bishops, one for the continent, another for the islands, with advice and assistance of presbyters to ordain fit persons, especially natives, and to take care of all the Churches." [2]

The two Societies I have mentioned divided between them so much of the British dominions as they were able to undertake—one, we have seen, looked to the East, the other turned to the West.

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[1] The Regulations are given at large in "Anderson's History of the Colonial Church," from which I have drawn the foregoing particulars. Vol. iii. pp. 62 *et seq.*

[2] "Life of Kennet," p. 123.

One of the first fields of labour selected by the Propagation Society was America, where religious communities already existed. Pennsylvania was planted by Quakers, and New England by Congregationalists; and large provision had been made for the spiritual wants of people attached to those persuasions. At the commencement of the last century, two of the most active and zealous agents supported by English Episcopalians, were George Keith and John Talbot, who employed themselves chiefly—no doubt, at the expense of great labour and much self-denial—in exposing the errors of the Quakers, whom they denominated "heathen," and in opposing Congregationalists, whom they counted schismatics, with the view of bringing them over to the Episcopal communion. The correspondence of the two men just named[1] largely relates to controversies of this description; and, as might be expected, a great deal of bad feeling was thus engendered on both sides. Mutual resentments were kindled and kept alive, and each party misunderstood and misrepresented more or less the objects and intentions of the others. Keith incited Talbot to ever-increasing zeal in this new crusade; and Talbot praised Keith for his wonderful exertions in support of the Church against the sectaries. Talbot was charged with Jacobite tendencies. No imputation of the kind extended to Keith; and whether the

[1] Records of the S. P. G.

former was justly suspected or not of political disaffection, he certainly incurred, at last, the displeasure of the ecclesiastical authorities at home by coming over to England and obtaining consecration as a bishop at the hands of the Nonjurors. Not a little bitterness continued to exist throughout the period now before us, between some of the agents of the Propagation Society and that part of the English-speaking population of America treated as schismatics; but there were several instances in which a more tolerant and Christian spirit was mutually manifested; and, in a few cases, at a later date, something like co-operation obtained. "We have got a small chapel at Windsor," says a missionary in 1771, "which answers for a church for me, for a meeting-house whenever a Dissenting Minister happens to come that way in my absence, and for a school-house on week days. It was built by subscription of the inhabitants indiscriminately, Churchmen and Dissenters, according to their abilities." [1]

We may conclude that the managers of the Society at home were fairly represented by their agents abroad; and that the controversial spirit at one time, and the spirit of union at another—that the exclusiveness of High Church missionaries in one place, and the liberal spirit of Low Church missionaries in another—corresponded with changes and varieties of

[1] Hawkins's "Missions of the Church of England," p. 363.

sentiment existing in the Committee of Direction at home—for it appears that early in the history of the Society, a Committee, although not provided for in the charter, began to undertake the guidance of affairs.

Besides those in America who professed Puritan or Quaker principles, there were great numbers who professed no ecclesiastical principles at all, and were living in the neglect of religion altogether. Such people needed spiritual instruction, and it was an act of real Christian charity on the part of the Propagation Society, to seek, as it very earnestly did, in many parts, to supply what was so urgently required.

The history of the Society includes an account of labours carried on by its agents or friends amongst the negroes of North America and South Carolina. The missionaries were directed to give assistance in their Christian education, and a school for that purpose was opened in New York.[1] But in the first of the fields of labour just mentioned, untoward circumstances seem to have checked all progress, especially a negro conspiracy so early as 1715, which brought reproach upon one of the missionaries, whose conduct, however, was vindicated by the Colonial Governor. In the year 1727 the Bishop of London sent a letter to the masters and mistresses of families in the English plantations abroad, exhorting them to encourage

[1] Humphrey's "Historical Account," p. 233.

and promote the instruction of their negroes in the Christian faith.[1] Nor do the American Indians appear to have been overlooked; they were met with and instructed in the far north, and a touching story is told of a Mohawk warrior, so late as 1818, who, in the recesses of a forest, told Bishop Hobart, of New York, how he had, in his young days, heard the Gospel preached by an agent of the Society, and, after the lapse of half a century, had not forgotten the truths which then he learned.

Amongst the S.P.G. records is an interesting letter on the state of Christianity among the Christianized Indians, signed by Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, and Nehemiah Walter—addressed to Sir William Ashurst, "Governor of the Corporation for the Propagation of the Gospel." Josiah Torrey is spoken of as a hopeful young man who had learned the Indian tongue and had begun to preach in that language.

"The gravity of the natives," as he reports, "and their diligent attendance in the time of worship, with the affectionate confessions of such as are admitted into the Church, made me hope that many of them may have the work of the Spirit wrought in them, according to the working of the mighty power of God. Their method respecting those that are admitted into their Church Communion is more according to the manner of the Churches in primitive times, than is now practised among the Churches in most parts." Very

[1] Humphrey's "Historical Account," p. 257.

interesting particulars are given of the mode of admission, resembling that of the early Congregationalists, which may be accounted for when we find it stated, "They were taught by the Apostle Eliot, his name is of wonderful authority among them."[1]

Newfoundland, not only visited by sailors and fishermen in search of seal skins, and other ocean spoils, but inhabited by 7,000 Englishmen, attracted the attention of the Society in its earliest years; but the efforts to meet its wants were feeble and tardy. A church was built at St. John's in 1705, and a missionary laboured there; but not until 1722 do we find another planted in the neighbourhood, and the first appears to have depended for support upon the liberality of the Newfoundland merchants. Other clergymen followed, only, however, at lengthened intervals; and the reports continue to disclose the paucity of fitting men who presented themselves for the work, as well as the same circumscribed pecuniary resources which formed a theme for lamentation from the commencement of the enterprise. Educational efforts of different kinds were put forth in the West Indies; and in Barbadoes a college, called General Codrington's College, was established and entrusted to the care of "The Society for the Pre-

[1] The Mathers were New England Congregationalists. Journal, August, 1705, S.P.G. Records. Appendix to Journals, 1701, 1810, No. lxvi.

paration of Scholars and the Supply of Ministers for these Parts."[1]

The names of several missionaries little known are mentioned in the Society's annals as worthy of honour —one only, and it is a very remarkable one, can be here particularly noticed.

The Reverend Clement Hall laboured in North Carolina, and acted as a missionary amongst the Indians of Chowan County and the neighbouring districts. On one occasion, within three weeks, he preached sixteen times, also baptizing 400 children and 20 adults. Chapels and court-houses were seldom large enough to accommodate the multitudes who crowded to his ministry, so that he had to preach in the forest, by the river side, and on the seashore. It is computed that within eight years before 1752, he journeyed 14,000 miles, preached about 700 sermons, and baptized above 6,000 children and grown-up people, besides performing countless other offices. The temporal aid he received from the Society was small indeed, never exceeding £30 a year. What the inhabitants of the colony contri-

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[1] Mr. Pratt, in his "Propaganda," pp. 52–55, gives a chronological table from 1718 to 1818 of the stations, numbers, and stipends of the missionaries and schoolmasters employed by the S.P.G. In 1718 the salaries for thirty-one agents amounted to £1,526. In 1719, for twenty-nine agents, the salaries amounted to £1,396. The next year the agents were twenty-seven and the expenditure £1,261.

buted did very little to eke out the miserable pittance, and therefore it is supposed that this self-denying and diligent man must have had some resources of his own. "In weariness and painfulness, yet with faith and hope unbroken, he persevered unto the end; and at the expiration of four years after his appointment to St. Paul's, worn out with sickness and hard toil, Clement Hall closed, in the bosom of an affectionate and grateful people, a career of pious usefulness which has been rarely if ever equalled."[1]

Above others that could be mentioned as instances of zeal on behalf of work abroad, there were two men of wide and lasting fame, whom it would be inexcusable to pass over.

Thomas Wilson, Bishop of Sodor and Man—whose life in the world-known island on the Irish Sea has been so gracefully described by the last great hymnologist of our day—not only laboured to promote the spiritual well-being of the Manx population, but took a deep interest also in the propagation of the Gospel in foreign lands. He devised a scheme "for educating young persons within the Isle of Man, in order to be sent abroad for the propagation of the Gospel," and seems to have made some proposals to the Society to that effect; for in 1711–12, the Report states that the Society had waived the acceptance of Bishop Wilson's

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[1] Hawkins's "Missions of the Church of England," p. 79. Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 492, 493.

proposal upon a prospect that Codrington's College, already referred to—a College founded out of an estate left by a Governor of Antigua who bore the name—might be a more convenient seminary to provide for the education of scholars and the supply of ministers for those parts.

In 1699, Wilson had issued a tract on "The Principles and Duties of Christianity," for the use of the people in the Isle of Man—the first work ever printed in the Manx language;—and in this little publication is found the germ of a larger work published by him in 1740. He had been early associated with Bray, one of the founders of the two Societies at whose proceedings we have glanced, and had caught somewhat of his missionary spirit. Just before the last mentioned date, he had met with General Oglethorpe, the founder of the colony in Georgia, who had greatly excited the good bishop by a conversation he had held with him respecting the Indians in that quarter of America.[1]

Wilson's enlargement of his tract on "The Principles and Duties of Christianity," took the form of "An Essay towards an Instruction for the Indians," and consisted of dialogues between an Indian and a missionary. The first nine dialogues contain such instruction as is needful to prepare for baptism. The remainder explains the nature of that ordinance, and also of the Lord's Supper; together with an exposi-

[1] Anderson, vol. iii. p. 325.

tion of the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer.

The other instance of extraordinary zeal was no other than George Berkeley, one of the most brilliant literary celebrities of the age. Being, like Swift, a native of Ireland, and holding preferment in the sister isle, he has not come particularly under our notice in describing the religion of England. But his connection with English missionary operations now brings him before us. The companion of Addison, of Steele, of Atterbury, of Swift, of Arbuthnot, and of Pope, he seems to have delighted everybody whom he met. Pope ascribed—

"To Berkeley every virtue under heav'n." [1]

Atterbury declared, "So much understanding, so much knowledge, so much innocence, and such humility I did not think had been the portion of any but angels, till I saw this gentleman." [2] And Swift, when recommending him as a young man to the Earl of Peterborough as chaplain and secretary, assigns as a motive, "This, I think I am bound to do, in honour and conscience, to use all my little credit towards helping forward men of worth in the world." [3] In 1724 Berkeley received the Deanery of Derry; and this and other circumstances indicative of the position

[1] Epilogue to "Satires." Dial. ii. l. 73.
[2] "Duncombe's Letters," pp. 106, 107.
[3] Scott's "Life of Swift," pp. 155–158.

and popularity of the man, are introduced now simply in order to bring out in relief the intensity of a missionary ardour which could induce him to sacrifice his Irish home and his English acquaintanceships, that he might execute a cherished plan for extending Christianity in our plantations and amongst the heathen, by means of a College for the education of young men. Not only did he exhort others to take up the cross; he took it up himself. These are his words in reference to the subject:—

"For himself he can only say, that as he values no preferment upon earth so much as that of being employed in the execution of his design, so he hopes to make up for other defects by the sincerity of his endeavours."[1]

He refers to what had been done by Spanish and French missionaries, and by their example seeks to inflame the zeal of the Church of England; and then he proceeds to notice objections current in those days—such as are not unknown in ours—that there was work enough to do at home, and that no success can be expected among savages. To the first he replies, that religion, like light, is imparted without being diminished, that what is done abroad can be no hindrance to the conversion of infidels at home; to the second, that ignorance is not so incurable as error, and that the savage Americans, if unimproved

[1] "Proposal for the Better Supplying of Churches in our Foreign Plantations," Berkeley's Works, vol. iii. pp. 213–230.

by education, are also unincumbered with superstition and prejudice.

Such representations indicate the missionary spirit which throbbed in Berkeley's breast, and which he sought to infuse into the hearts of his brethren. America especially aroused his benevolent aspirations. With a prophetic eye, and walking in George Herbert's footsteps, he looked to the new hemisphere, and sung the well-known verse,—

> "Westward the course of Empire takes its way;
> The four first Acts already past,
> A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
> Time's noblest offspring is the last."

Banquets are now-a-days common appendages to benevolent societies. A banquet of a peculiar kind occurred in 1726, when Berkeley was full of his missionary projects for America.

Lord Bathhurst relates that, "The members of the Scriblerus Club, being met at his house at dinner, agreed to rally Berkeley, who was also his guest, on his scheme at Bermudas. Berkeley having listened to the many lively things they had to say, begged to be heard in his turn, and displayed his plan with such an astonishing and animating force of eloquence and enthusiasm, that they were struck dumb, and after some pause, rose up all together, with earnestness exclaiming, 'Let us set out with him immediately.'"[1]

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[1] Warton on Pope, quoted by Macintosh, Prely. Diss., Ency. Brit. p. 350.

Not only came there a flash of excitement after the eloquent appeal, but there exists a list in Berkeley's handwriting of promised subscriptions for Bermuda, including £300 from the Dean of York and his brother; £500 from a lady who desired to be unknown; £500 from Lady Betty Hastings, and £200 from Sir Robert Walpole.[1]

Berkeley aimed at founding a College out of lands in St. Kitt's, ceded to the English Crown by the French at the peace of Utrecht; and, to secure the boon, applied for a Royal Charter under sanction of Parliament.

After six weeks' struggle against an earnest parliamentary opposition, he saw his point carried in the House of Commons by a large majority, in May, 1726; and in writing to Prior the poet, he said, in reference to his antagonists: "But, God be praised, there is an end of all their narrow and mercantile views and endeavours, as well as of the jealousies and suspicions of others (some whereof were very great men), who apprehended this College may produce an independency in America, or at least lessen its dependency upon England."[2]

A College was to be founded in the Bermudas, and Berkeley was to be the first President. The vision brightened before him; but delays came, difficulties arose, and the King died ere the Charter received the

[1] Anderson, vol. iii. p. 350. [2] Ibid. p. 351.

broad seal; but that important addition was fixed to the instrument at last, and forth sailed the zealous Irishman for Rhode Island—a convenient spot, it was thought, for holding intercourse with the Bermudas. The wardens of the English church, the vestrymen, and the people of Newport, led by the Chaplain, repaired to the Ferry Wharf to welcome one announced by the pilots as "a great dignitary of the Church of England, called 'Dean.'" In Rhode Island—where Roger Williams had established absolute religious liberty—Berkeley built a house; and at Newport he was wont to preach. "All sects," and Rhode Island was full of them, "rushed to hear him: even the Quakers, with their broad-brimmed hats, came and stood in the aisles."[1]

It was in a valley amidst hanging rocks, with a natural alcove, that he wrote his "Alciphron; or, the Minute Philosopher;" and the chair in which he sat for the purpose is still preserved as a relic; but his philosophical dreams did not drive away his missionary desires, though his fondly cherished hopes were soon extinguished by circumstances which reflected the utmost disgrace upon a number of persons who had helped to obtain the Charter, and who had buoyed him up all the way through with promises, never to be fulfilled. Twenty thousand pounds had been expected; "but if you

[1] "Updike's Hist." p. 120.

ask me as a friend," said Sir Robert Walpole, "whether Dean Berkeley should continue in America, expecting the payment of £20,000, I advise him by all means to return home to Europe, and to give up his present expectations." [1] He had to give them up for ever. His missionary zeal, after a short flash of fashionable sympathy, found little or no response amongst his numerous English friends and admirers, who were only too glad to see him back in his old haunts. Queen Caroline welcomed him at Court, delighted in his conversation, and admired his character; in 1734 he was consecrated Bishop of Cloyne.

Yet he remained faithful to his first love, even unto death. He sent to Yale College "the finest collection of books," it is said, "that ever came at one time to America." He made over to the same institution the property he possessed in Rhode Island, known as "the Dean's farm," containing ninety acres. After paying back to subscribers the sums they had given for the undertaking he was now compelled to relinquish, he found £200 left unclaimed, and this he contributed to the Propagation Society, in the year 1747.

In 1732, soon after his return from America, he preached the Annual Sermon for the Society, with the great advantage of having been an eye-witness of what was going on abroad; first he bore witness to the good character of the missionaries, and then

[1] Anderson, vol. iii. p. 366.

alluded to a peculiar difficulty with which they had to contend.

"An ancient apathy to the Indians, whom it seems our first planters (therein, as in certain other particulars, affecting to imitate Jews rather than Christians) imagined they had a right to tread on the foot of Canaanites and Amalekites, together with an irrational contempt of the blacks, as creatures of another species, who had no right to be instructed or admitted to the sacraments, have proved a main obstacle to the conversion of these poor people. To this may be added an erroneous notion that the being baptized is inconsistent with a state of slavery."

Berkeley was anxious for the establishment of Episcopates in the American Colonies; and this circumstance brings before us a fact of great importance in the history of the Propagation Society, and of Episcopalian missionary efforts on the other side the Atlantic, down to the establishment of American Independence. It was very natural that zealous Episcopalians at home should desire to see their own ecclesiastical system in complete order amongst their Episcopalian brethren abroad; and equally natural that the latter should in this respect sympathize with the former. Great inconveniences attended the ordination of colonial clergymen in this country; and the episcopal supervision of them in America by the Bishop of London, who had to include them within his diocese, led to misunderstandings and contentions, which were not only unpleasant, but really

scandalous. This was especially the case when Gibson held the metropolitan see. Sherlock, afterwards, in 1752, felt himself in a most distressing position, and wrote to the colonists, saying,—

"I think myself at present in a very bad situation: Bishop of a vast country, without power, or influence, or any means of promoting true religion; sequestered from the people over whom I have the care, and must never hope to see. I should be tempted to throw off all this care quite, were it not for the sake of preserving even the appearance of an Episcopal Church in the plantations." [1]

But though the desire of an American Episcopate was strong, and the efforts in relation to it were vigorous and persevering, the scheme was frustrated. There were legal difficulties connected with the subject, arising out of the peculiarity of the Episcopate in England, where Bishops are prelates, and form part of the national Parliamentary Constitution. What was the bearing of English law on the institution of Colonial Bishoprics, was then a perplexing question; and in addition to this circumstance was another obstacle—the opposition of the Colonists, many of whom, especially the New Englanders, had a traditional dislike to bishops, inherited from their forefathers, who had been driven out of their own country in days when bishops persecuted Puritans, Presby-

[1] Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 376, 433.

terians, and Independents. To this opposition, as very formidable, Archbishop Secker referred in a letter written in 1754, saying, "For so long as they are uneasy, and remonstrate, regard will be paid to them and their friends here, by our Ministers of State." The want of success on the part of Church rulers in this respect may be further attributed to the ecclesiastical indifference of the Ministers of State. Neither Sir Robert Walpole nor the Duke of Newcastle, upon whom the Colonial administration long devolved, cared for the spiritual interests of America; they looked at Colonial questions entirely from a political point of view, and were deaf to the appeals of men who were earnest in the pursuit of religious ends. Perhaps, beside other causes for the disappointment of such persons, there might be this—a wish to retain every possible bond of dependence between the American colonists and the Home Government. Repeated allusions occur in the correspondence on this long-agitated question, to the danger of the colonies becoming "independent of the salutary control of the mother country."[1]

It would seem that the most effectual of all the causes specified was the opposition of New England, the government of which was in the hands of Independents. To overcome this opposition, advocates of the Episcopate argued that no coercive power was

[1] See Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 377, 437.

sought; that the only authority desired was within the Episcopal communion for purely spiritual purposes; that the colonists were not to be charged with the support of the bishops; and that there was no intention of placing them where Nonconformity had decidedly gained the ascendent.[1]

[1] Ibid. p. 432.

CHAPTER XII.

1727-1760.

RETURNING to the History of Dissent, I proceed to notice some celebrities included within its pale under the Second of the Georges.

Thomas Bradbury was no great friend to his Nonconformist brother who reformed English psalmody, and he would contemptuously speak of "Watts' whims." The two men were cast in different moulds; one so political and pugnacious could have little sympathy with one so recluse and peaceful. Still Bradbury served the cause of Dissent in particular, and the cause of civil and religious liberty at large, by his indomitable courage and activity. We have seen him with Bishop Burnet, and at Court, after the accession of George I. Now it remains to state, that Bradbury continued afterwards for many years diligently to fulfil his pulpit duties. But he could not cease to be a polemic. Against Socinianism, against Arianism, against Antipædobaptism, he drew his bow to the very last. His final utterances were in harmony with his whole life. He preached in 1759, on the anniversary of the accession of George I., from the words, "This man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into

our land."[1] A royalist and a patriot, fond of singing "The Roast Beef of Old England," he is said to have been a man of generous nature and of warm affections. Whatever asperity there might be in his writings, we are told he was by no means deficient in Christian charity, and that his vices leaned on virtue's side, for he was always open and honest, and simply expressed the sentiments of his heart.[2]

In pursuing this History, we meet with difficulties arising out of the conditions of Dissent. There is a great want of *fixity* in the circumstances both of ministers and congregations. Many changes occurred in their local position ; some buildings used for worship were occupied only for a time ; Churches migrated from spot to spot in the metropolis ; and elder communities became extinct, or were divided into separate parts. Hence arises confusion in the records of the period ; and at times one is at a loss to determine with what community or with what locality a particular minister is to be chiefly associated.

Some difficulties will be avoided, and more clearness and consistency will be given to this narrative, if, instead of describing London pastors mainly in relation to the flocks they fed, I group them together, in divisions determined by certain duties of a characteristic kind which they are known to have discharged.

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[1] Micah v. 5.

[2] Wilson's "Dissenting Churches," vol. iii. p. 532.

Lectureships formed a prominent institution. Lectures were appointed to be periodically delivered at particular places, and their delivery was assigned to different persons, who associated themselves together according to a permanent plan.

Of this kind three centres appear, with which certain leading ministers were connected. The first is the Old Jewry, which became a distinguished neighbourhood under Charles II., where stood the magnificent mansion of a merchant prince, that vied with the proudest abodes of the nobility. A Presbyterian meeting-house, of a modest description, was erected there in 1701, and is described in 1808 as still existing. In it more than one Lectureship was established. The first was in 1723, "set on foot on a Tuesday evening, for the purpose of stating and defending the evidences of natural and revealed religion." Thither for six months in the winter—for to that season they were restricted—London citizens repaired for the purpose of hearing two celebrated Divines—Dr. Lardner and Dr. Chandler. Every reader is acquainted with Lardner's "Credibility," a work of wonderful research, published between 1733 and 1754—whence Paley and others have derived materials for more popular productions, as out of the columns, arches, and walls of ancient Rome, modern architects have constructed palaces. As to ecclesiastical government, he was a Presbyterian; as to theology, he entertained peculiar views of the

Person of Christ, believing that in His true and proper humanity, the *Logos*, which is "the Divine power and wisdom," marvellously dwelt—that He was miraculously conceived, and that He possessed Divine qualities or perfections. Lardner's literary reputation secured for him amongst all classes respect and influence; but at the time he became a Jewry Street Lecturer his fame had scarcely commenced; and as his elocution was bad, his style inelegant, and the substance of his discourses dry and unattractive, his audiences were not likely to be very large or much interested. To other disadvantages, he added one thus described by himself: "I am so deaf indeed at present, that when I sit in the pulpit, and the congregation is singing, I can hardly tell whether they are singing or not."[1] It is curious, however, to learn, that notwithstanding this infirmity, he was visited by persons of various professions and different countries, who, provided with pens and ink, maintained communion by the tedious process of writing what they wished to say.

Far otherwise in point of attractiveness was Dr. Chandler, who carried on the Lecture by himself after Lardner's retirement. He has been noticed already, and here I may add, that though a fellow-student with Butler and Secker, and so familiar withGreek, that he could write it with as much ease as English, yet, even whilst pastor of a Presbyterian Church in the

[1] "Memoirs of Lardner," p. 11.

Old Jewry, he was so needy, owing to losses and misfortunes, that, to eke out a living, he kept a bookseller's shop. His works are numerous, and remarkable for their ingenuity; but, like Tertullian, he often appears, when advocating the cause of Revelation, too much in the light of a special pleader. His conferences with bishops on the subject of a comprehension have been mentioned, together with the remarks to which that circumstance gave rise; and it may be, that for some such reason, and for a certain political connection he had with Lord Bute, suspicions arose touching his sincerity as a Nonconformist minister. Yet, with a keen sense of denominational defects, he maintained an honest denominational attachment; for when, on his admitting that certain things amongst Dissenters gave him offence, a prelate jocosely asked him, "Why, Doctor, do you not leave them?" he replied, "My Lord, I would, if I could find a worthier body of people."

Towards the close of life he was wont to say, "that to secure the Divine felicity promised by Christ, was the principal and almost the only thing that made life desirable. That to attain this, he would gladly die, submitting himself entirely to God, as to the time and manner of his death, whose will was most righteous and good; and being persuaded that all was well which ended well for eternity."[1]

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[1] Wilson, vol. ii. p. 377.

Chandler was a popular preacher. His appearance, aided by clearness of voice, and distinctness of utterance, favourably impressed his hearers; and if the congregations when Lardner delivered the Lecture were small and uninterested, it may be well imagined that Chandler attracted large assemblies and riveted their best attention.

But the Old Jewry had a still more popular lecturer in Dr. James Foster, a General Baptist minister in Barbican, and afterwards pastor of an Independent Church at Pinners' Hall. So renowned did he become, that Pope celebrated him in the well-known lines,—

> "Let modest Foster, if he will, excel
> Ten metropolitans in preaching well."

His popularity in fashionable and literally circles was owing, it is said, to the circumstance of a person of rank happening to enter his meeting-house during a shower of rain, and becoming so enchanted with what he heard, that he extolled its excellence to his friends, and so drew them to hear the Old Jewry orator. "Thither," we are told, "went wits, free thinkers, and numbers of the clergy, who, whilst they gratified their curiosity, had their prepossessions shaken and their prejudices loosened. And of the usefulness and success of these lectures he had a large number of written testimonials from unknown as well as known persons."

As Foster certainly relinquished a belief in orthodox doctrine on some points, he incurred the charge of infidelity, and this he met by saying, "he esteemed it an honour to be a firm believer and, from devotedness of mind, a preacher and public advocate for the Christian institution." "I think," he adds, "those justly chargeable with great baseness, pusillanimity, and hypocrisy, who either preach or profess it for the sake of popularity or any worldly consideration whatsoever, without being themselves real and hearty Christians."[1] In connection with this avowal, it is interesting to relate the following incident. A gentleman about to take orders in the Church of England called on Foster, to converse with him respecting the difficulties of Christianity. "Have you asked," said Foster, "a solution of your difficulties from God this morning? Have you prayed to the Fountain of all light for information?" "No," said the visitor. "Sir," rejoined the preacher, "you will excuse my gratifying your curiosity upon the subject of revelation, while you are chargeable with the breach of one of the first duties of natural religion."[2]

John Dunton, the indefatigable versifier of an earlier period, had made it his business to sketch in rhyme the preachers of the day; and somebody, about the time to which this portion of our history relates,

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[1] Foster's "Discourses on Natural Religion," vol. i. p. 269.
[2] "Protestant Dissenter's Mag.," vol. iii. p. 309.

took up his pen and wrote lines in which, after dealing out to others unfriendly criticisms, he places Foster on the loftiest pinnacle. They are entitled—

VERSES MADE ON THE DISSENTING MINISTERS AND FOUND AT HAMLIN'S COFFEE-HOUSE BY AN UNCERTAIN AUTHOR.

1.

Behold how papal Wright, with lordly pride,
Directs his haughty eye on either side,
Gives forth his doctrine with imperious nod,
And fraught with pride addresses e'en his God.

2.

Not so the gentle Watts; in him we find
The fairest pattern of an humble mind;
In him the softest, meekest, virtue dwells
As mild, as light, as soft as evening gales.

3.

Tuning melodious nonsense, Bradbury stands
With head up-lifted and with dancing hands,
Prone to sedition and to slander free,
Sacheveral, sure, was but a type of thee.

4.

Mark how the pious matrons flock around,
Pleased with the tone of Guise's empty sound;
How sweetly each unmeaning period flows,
To lull the audience to a gentle doze.

5.

Eternal Bragge in never-ending strains
Unfolds the wonders Joseph's coat contains;
Of every hue describes a different cause,
And from each patch a solemn history draws.

6.

With soundest judgment and with nicest skill
The learned Hunt explains his Master's will;
So just his meaning and his sense so true,
He only pleases the discerning few.

7.

But see the accomplished orator appear,
Refined in language and his reasoning clear;
Thou only, Foster, hast the pleasing art
At once to charm the ear and mend the heart.[1]

Another centre of Nonconformist influence in connection with lecturing, was Salters' Hall, where met the Synod of that name. There was delivered the Merchants' Lecture, so called because intended for men of business, during an hour of the day when they could turn aside from common affairs for spiritual instruction.

Dr. Wright, noticed in the lines just quoted, Presbyterian pastor of a Church in Carter Lane, Doctors' Commons—"where people flocked in crowds to hear him, and there were continual accessions to the Church"[2]—is a name on the Lecturers' list. Dr. Herring, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, frequented Wright's ministry; and the latter is described as—

"A serious, moving preacher, zealous for the promotion of vital godliness." "He was zealous for the Presbyterian

[1] Doddridge MSS., New College. [2] Wilson, vol. ii. p. 140.

form of Church government, and, in doctrinal sentiment, a Moderate Calvinist." His temper and spirit appear in his words: "I do not stick to say that I had rather be the author of the small book that shall be instrumental to save a soul from sin and death, and to bring it to heaven, than of the finest piece of science and literature in the world, that tends only to accomplish men for the present scene of being and action."[1]

Daniel Neal, the well-known author of the "History of the Puritans," for many years pastor of an Independent Church in Silver Street, engaged with other ministers to deliver lectures at Salters' Hall in 1734, on the doctrines of Roman Catholicism, respecting which, at that time, there existed great excitement. Neal had then distinguished himself as an advocate for inoculation—when the practice met with much opposition—and had enjoyed an interview on the subject with the princesses and the Prince of Wales, afterwards George II. "In his own private judgment he was a Protestant Dissenter; and his doctrinal sentiments came nearest to those of Calvin, which he judged to be most agreeable to Scripture, and best adapted to the great ends of religion; but neither his charity nor his friendships were confined to men of his own opinion."[2]

The pastor at Salters' Hall was John Barker, a

[1] Wilson, vol. ii. pp. 139–146.
[2] Ibid., vol. iii. p. 100.

friend of Dr. Doddridge. Like Chandler, he leaned to the idea of comprehension, provided it could be secured on reasonable terms; but, though he longed to break down walls of separation, he discovered that, under existing circumstances, any equitable scheme for the accomplishment of his object remained an utter impracticability.[1]

Another centre of London Nonconformity is found in Lime Street, where stood "a meeting," swallowed up by the old East India House. There a Lecture was established in 1730 for the exhibition and defence of Calvinistic doctrines, and only men of a decided stamp took part in the institution.

Chief of these was Dr. Gill, a Particular Baptist who read Targum and Talmud, the Raboth and the Book Zohar, and enjoyed between twenty and thirty years' acquaintance with those formidable tomes; besides diligently studying the Fathers, the ecclesiastical historians and the rites and customs of Oriental lands, and also writing an Exposition of the Old and New Testaments in nine folios, and other publications in seven quartos.

Another lecturer, not at Lime Street, but at Berry Street, and Little Saint Helen's, was Dr. Guyse, a man of great learning and of extraordinary zeal. He suffered for his orthodoxy whilst a pastor in Hertford, and afterwards entered into controversy with an anti-

[1] Wilson's "Dissenting Churches," vol. ii. p. 52.

Calvinistic opponent. He had encountered Chandler on the question, "What is meant by preaching Christ?" but after warm words, the dispute ended, as such things rarely do, in an affectionate reconciliation.

To the same class of Lecturers belonged Dr. Thomas Ridgely—a divine chiefly remarkable for his "System of Divinity," in two folio volumes, in which he maintained the doctrine of Reprobation, yet explained it so as somewhat to take off the edge of objections to that tenet, in the revolting form it commonly assumed.

Before leaving London, a word must be said respecting the education of ministerial students.

The origin of the Fund Board has been noticed elsewhere.[1] A kindred Society is to be coupled with it.

A hundred and fifty years ago, Sweeting's Alley was a different place from what the locality is now. It was a narrow thoroughfare, lined by old-fashioned houses, with beetling brows, nodding under the shadow of the second Exchange. There stood a dwelling from whose front projected the sign of the King's Head. The proprietor, about the year 1730, was, in common with a few friends, much concerned about the state of religion, and earnestly desired to see it revived according to the theological type of Owen,

[1] "Church of the Revolution," p. 439.

Charnock, and Bates. They commenced a weekly meeting; and, the sign on the house becoming identified with it, the association gained the appellation of the King's Head Society. The members afterwards assembled at the King's Head in the Poultry, and to them is attributed the establishment of the Lime Street Lectureship; beyond that, they took in hand the improvement of ministerial education. They apprehended that young men were accepted in the Academies before their piety was ascertained, or their views were adequately formed. They felt that those who devoted themselves to the Christian ministry ought to believe and practise the principles of the Gospel. Those who enjoyed their patronage were, from 1731 to 1735, sent to Samuel Parkins, a minister at Clerkenwell; from 1735 to 1740 they were entrusted to the care of Dr. Taylor. Subsequently, the work of tuition devolved on Thomas Hubbard, a Stepney pastor, who soon died, to be succeeded by Dr. Marryat and Dr. Walker.

Amongst minor archæological curiosities, we read of Plasterers' Hall, in Addle Street. It early passed out of the hands of the Pinners, and came into the hands of the Plasterers, who, like some other Civic Companies, allowed their place of rendezvous, or some part of it, to be transformed into a place of Nonconforming worship. The building came to be employed as a Lecture Hall by Marryat and Walker; and there the candidates prosecuted their studies, not, however,

residing with their tutors, but in the houses of neighbouring friends. In 1754 a formal union took place between this Society and the Fund Board, showing that mutual alienation had been overcome, and that both parties were now prepared to co-operate in a common effort.

In connection with the educational plans of the age, the name of William Coward appears conspicuous. This London merchant of large fortune lived at Walthamstow, a favourite residence for wealthy Dissenters, and there he displayed his political principles by erecting in his pleasure grounds a statue of William the Third on horseback. There he offered his hospitality to the celebrities of Dissent, under very rigid domestic restrictions, for he would never admit visitors for the night after eight o'clock, or visitors at dinner after one. He had odd ways, being somewhat testy; but he possessed a liberal disposition, and consecrated a large portion of his property to religious objects. He patronized the Berry Street Lecture, felt anxious to promote what he termed "preaching Christ direct," and thought of founding an Academy, of which he wished Dr. Doddridge to be principal. This scheme fell through; but he continued whilst he lived to defray the expense of educating students at Northampton; and by will he created a trust for educating those who sought to enter the Independent Ministry, as well as for other Nonconformist purposes, committing the administration of the trust to Dr.

Watts, Dr. Guyse, Daniel Neal, and his son, a layman: they were to choose successors.[1]

It is time to go down into the country.

Attention is invited first to Northampton. There still remains an old square meeting-house, now altered internally, but in outward appearance much the same as in 1750, with five windows and two doors in front, each surmounted by a penthouse, and, just under the dripping of the main roof, a square sundial.[2] There Philip Doddridge preached from 1730 to 1751. The four volumes of sermons printed from his MSS. afford a sample of his preaching. In matter evangelical, in arrangement lucid, in imagery tasteful, in diction perspicuous, they must have secured attention and excited interest. Never very great, they were always very good; reminding one of English valleys full of cornfields, gardens, and brooks of water. His words are worth remembering by all preachers,—"May I remember that I am not to compose an harangue, to acquire to myself the reputation of an eloquent orator, but that I am preparing food for precious and immortal souls, and dispensing the

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[1] I have the honour to be one of the Trustees in lineal succession to Daniel Neal; and it is from the traditions of the trust that I have derived the foregoing particulars.

[2] The building in 1851, when the centenary of Doddridge's death was held, appeared altogether much the same as in Doddridge's time. I describe its external aspect from what I remember of it as it was then.

sacred Gospel which my Redeemer brought from heaven and sealed with His blood."[1] It seems to have been his practice to compose hymns suited to his discourses, and to commemorate the Lord's death once a month, on Sunday night, when, as the moon shone, people from the villages could conveniently attend divine service ; and one can picture them wending their way home, looking up to the blue sky, and thinking over their preacher's discourse, on "God the everlasting light of the saints above."[2] Doddridge's hymns have a character of their own. He had not the poetical genius with which his friend Isaac Watts was endowed, and which he so fully appreciated. None of his own metrical compositions have the grandeur of certain psalms and hymns written by him who has been called "the Poet of the Sanctuary." But there is a sweetness and tenderness in Doddridge's versification on devotional subjects, in admirable harmony with his amiable character, which has made him a favourite with all denominations, and has given him a place in the hymnology of English Christendom which he is not likely to lose.

Doddridge acted as a theological professor ; the

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[1] See his Sermon on "The Evil and Danger of Neglecting Men's Souls."

[2] Many of my impressions respecting Doddridge are derived from his correspondence remaining in MSS., either possessed by my friend Sir Charles Reed, or preserved in the Library of New College, St. John's Wood.

Academy stood—indeed, still remains with some alterations—in Sheep Street, with a row of pilasters in front, a specimen of Georgian architecture. There, at six o'clock on a summer's morning, he met his students. Later, at family worship, one of them translated from the Hebrew Bible; and after breakfast the Doctor lectured, unfolding a string of "propositions," "scholias" and "lemmas," bearing on some branch of Ethics or Divinity. Civil Law, Hieroglyphics, Mythology, English History, Logic, Rhetoric, Mathematics, Anatomy, and Jewish Antiquities are enumerated as parts of the curriculum; but surely these numerous subjects must have been treated in a very superficial way. Critical lectures, including germs of the "Expositor," were delivered weekly; and polite literature was not neglected in this hive of industry. Pastoral theology and the composition of sermons received considerable attention, when the Professor inculcated the necessity of "preaching Christ." His pupils on an average numbered thirty-four, and he sustained his office for two-and-twenty years: about two hundred young men passed under his care, among whom were one hundred and twenty ministers. Some were preparing for the Church of Scotland, and one for the Church of England. No doubt can be thrown on Doddridge's religious convictions; but, in reference to scientific theology, he seems to have considered that moderation and charity required him to modify the utterance of opinions in the presence of those

whose sentiments differed from his own; and, as some of his students had little or no sympathy with him in his evangelical opinions,[1] he sometimes left an impression, that conclusions which he presented were either unsound or unimportant.

But to the spiritual welfare of the students, by seeking to promote devotional habits and consistency of conduct, he paid the greatest attention; and it would seem that such efforts were attended in many cases by beneficial results.

Doddridge was not heterodox on the redemptive work of Christ and the regenerating operations of the Holy Spirit. His views on these subjects were moderately Calvinistic. It is also clear that he fully believed in the Incarnation; but the mode in which he conceived of that mystery somewhat resembled the scheme of Sabellius. He says—

"The word 'Person' commonly signifies one single, intelligent, voluntary agent, or conscious being; and this we choose to call the philosophical sense of the word; but in a political sense it may express the different relations supported by the same philosophical person; *i.e.*, the same man may be father, husband, son, etc., or the same prince, King of Great Britain, Duke of Brunswick, and Treasurer of the Empire."

Some resemblance exists between Doddridge's explanation of the term Person and the language of

[1] I have noticed illustrations of this in some of Doddridge's unpublished letters.

Sabellius; but I question whether Doddridge would have adopted some modes of expression which are reported respecting the ancient theologian.

"God is so united to the derived nature of Christ, and does so dwell in him," Doddridge says, "that by virtue of that union Christ may properly be called God."

He also believed, with Dr. Watts, in the pre-existence of a created soul in Christ, and rested his belief on the same considerations as did his learned friend.[1]

The main pillars of Doddridge's fame are his "Expositor," and the "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." Perhaps the latter, with all its imperfections, is the best religious book of the kind published in the first half of the last century; certainly it attained an immense popularity, being not only circulated amongst all denominations, but translated into the principal languages of Europe. His "Principles of the Christian Religion, in plain and easy verse," is now almost forgotten, but it found at the time acceptance in high quarters. "I must tell you," wrote Dr. Ayscough to the author, "Prince George (afterwards George III.) has learned several pages in your little book of verses without any direction from me."[2]

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[1] Doddridge, "Theological Lect." Def. lxxix. cxxviii. cxxvi. Corollary 1.

[2] I have been informed by a friend, that a relative of his who

Looking at the difference between the two men, it seems strange that Doddridge and Warburton should have been good friends; but it speaks well for both of them that they really were; and such a specimen of intercourse between persons of different opinions is worth being kept in everlasting remembrance.

"I have abundance of thanks," says the Episcopalian to the Independent, "to return for the friendly entertainment I met with at Northampton from you and your excellent lady. I must tell you frankly, you have more happiness than comes to the share of one man, and to make it the more exquisite, of several kinds. Providence has treated you with a feast of many courses, which none but a good Levite under the old law, when the dispensation was exact, could fairly pretend to. That you may long enjoy every part of it, especially that last and best, which shares and doubles all the rest, is the earnest prayer of your affectionate friend and brother."

When one thinks of the turbulent controversialist coming under the spell of Doddridge's spirit, it almost reminds us of the contrast and association between the Lion and Una, in the "Faerie Queene."

Doddridge's correspondence gives us a charming insight into the life of the period. He dates one letter from the house of a Nonconformist layman in Moorfields as from "the castle of friendship,"—and

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held an appointment in Windsor Castle, was once told by the King: "If I know anything of religion I owe it to Dr. Ayscough, and that at an early age."

another from the residence of Mr. Barker, "who prays as nobody else can pray," "such a Christian and such a friend as is very very seldom to be found or heard of." We find him drinking tea with Bradbury, and enjoying an evening with Mr. and Mrs. Godwin, the good lady lighting up six wax tapers to receive him, because she "knows he likes a light room." A letter from "dear Dr. Watts' study" informs us how he and Lady Abney came together to meet him, and how he was about to return to Newington in her ladyship's coach. He finds the poet "much enfeebled by his late fever, yet very conversable and better far than might be expected." "Miss Abney is grown finely tall, and my lady not older than last year." There are pleasant walks with friends in the goodly gardens of the hostess, a lady visitor there entering her protest "against minister's wives wearing curled hair and large hoops."[1]

Risdon Darracott, one of Dr. Doddridge's favourite pupils, became pastor of a Nonconformist Church in Wellington, Somersetshire, and he exceeded even his teacher in the zeal and unction of his ministry. Imbued with a Puritan spirit, he insisted upon doctrines which conspicuously shine in the theology of the Commonwealth; yet he was free from some exagger-

[1] These illustrations are gathered from unpublished letters, and I am not afraid of offending historical dignity by their insertion.

ations and deficiencies in their style of instruction. With an eloquence which gained for him the appellation of "Star of the West," he combined assiduous pastoral oversight, and made an indelible impression upon the neighbourhood where he lived, so that, after the lapse of a century, the memory of this good man is far from being effaced. What is very remarkable, whilst celebrated for his intensely evangelical preaching, he, by a rare liberality of judgment, exposed himself to the suspicion of contemporaries, who looked upon candour and charity as treasonable dispositions. So animated was he in the work he had to do, that it was said he looked "like one that lived upon live things"; and the vitality of his appeals manifested itself in their extraordinary results. His crowded place of worship, at a period when a country town in England did not commonly contain a church-going population, had to be enlarged, and still there remained pressure for want of room. He traversed the country round, set up charity schools, promoted the circulation of religious books, and so diffused the power of Christianity, that "some very profligate and abandoned sinners were deeply struck." The effects produced by Baxter at Kidderminster were repeated by Darracott at Wellington. He describes ale houses on Sunday as empty, nothing done in the shops of barbers, no idle walkers in the streets, "but an air of solemnity through the whole town." The number of communi-

cants rose from twenty-eight to three hundred, and numbers besides were more or less impressed by this Somersetshire preacher. When sickness arrested him in the midst of his toils, the seraphic fervour with which he expressed his love of the Gospel, and his humble confidence in the hope of eternal life cast fresh lustre on his name, and endeared him more than ever to his sorrowing people. He died at the age of forty-two, and his ministry proves, in connection with other instances, that this particular type of ecclesiastical character was not unknown in England during the first half of the eighteenth century.[1]

Looking at Nonconformity elsewhere, we select Kidderminster, the scene of Baxter's ministry, where a strong Puritan element may be traced surrounded by influences of a different description. Two remarkable Nonconformist ministers successively occupied the "Old Meeting House" during the second generation of the last century. The memory of John Spilsbury, nephew of Hall, Bishop of Bristol, who highly esteemed him, and "frequently resided in his family," was fondly cherished through many years; and after him came Benjamin Fawcett, in 1744, one of Doddridge's pupils.

We cannot leave Kidderminster without a word respecting "the Christian Merchant," as Joseph Wil-

[1] Bennett's "Star of the West," and Fawcett's Funeral Sermon for Darracott.

liams, a member of the Independent Church in that town, was commonly called. Alike remarkable for success in business, generosity in giving, wisdom in counsel, acquaintance with his Greek Testament, fervour of spirit in everything connected with religion, and indefatigable diligence in all well doing—he wrote a diary[1] which remains a proof of saint-like piety at a period when religious torpor is supposed to have been universal.

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[1] A third edition was published by Hanbury, under the title of "The Christian Merchant."

CHAPTER XIII.

1727–1760.

MODERN Moravianism is the daughter of an elder faith, and has been nourished by traditions of its parental history.

The orthodoxy of the communion bearing this name, as to the fundamental truths of Christianity, has never been questioned. It has always presented what may be called an "Evangelical" complexion; and the doctrines of the Atonement, of Justification by Faith, and of Personal Assurance, are prominent amongst Moravian beliefs. Peculiar aspects of sentiment and modes of expression in relation to these points at different times have marked the teachings of Moravian Divines, but the distinguishing characteristics of their system are found rather in their polity than in their creed.

John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, both Bohemian Reformers in the fifteenth century, are names honoured by all Protestants; and these men—whose sufferings and heroism invest the city of Constance with undying interest, as the traveller traces their steps from spot to spot on the shore of the beautiful lake—are claimed by Moravians as their spiritual ancestors; and no

doubt their consciousness of such a lineage has had much to do with their self-denying labours and their wonderful missionary achievements. There are links of connection between the Bohemian Church and our own country, inasmuch as, through Anne of Bohemia, queen of Richard II., relations existed between the two countries, and the people of Southern Germany became acquainted with John Wicliffe and the Lollards. Jerome, after paying a visit to England, took home with him the writings of our first Reformer; and out of the ashes of the two Reformers sprang the Hussite Fellowship of Christianity in the city of Prague and its romantic neighbourhood. A number of earnest souls denominated themselves *Fratres Unitatis* or *Unitas Fratrum*, binding themselves, not to seek the redress of wrongs by the sword of war, as their predecessors had done, but to rely on God and on the spiritual force of Christian remonstrance and effectual prayer. Terrible persecutions they had to endure after the year 1468, when a sanguinary edict was published against them. Prisons were crowded; confessors perished of hunger; some were tortured, the remainder fled to the woods. Luther's work scarcely touched Moravia, and the Brethren had to suffer renewed persecution, till in the latter part of the seventeenth century they were so harassed and scattered, that their existence then as a consolidated brotherhood might be said to end.

Comenius, with the only other surviving Bishop of

the United Brethren, consecrated two Episcopal successors, one of whom was his son-in-law, Peter Figulus Jablonsky, who was appointed to superintend the Moravian Diocese, or division of the Church. Before the banishment of Comenius, he had been minister in a little town named Fulneck, in the Margravate of Moravia, and there long afterwards his influence continued to be felt ; many of the inhabitants remaining steadfast in the Reformed faith, although forced in a measure to conform to Roman Catholic usages. Others emigrated and sought truth and liberty in neighbouring lands. A great awakening occurred in 1720 among the scattered remnants, both in Moravia and Bohemia, especially in Fulneck, the scene of the labours of Comenius.

Count Zinzendorf, a native of Dresden—one who combined much eccentricity with much spiritual goodness—and Christian David, a man of humble birth, were the great revivers of Moravianism, and founded, under romantic circumstances, the famous Moravian settlement in Lusatia, at Hernhut (the Lord's watch), situated on the Hutberg (the watch hill). Their first Bishop was David Nitschman, consecrated at Berlin in 1735, by Daniel Ernest Jablonsky, son of Peter Figulus Jablonsky, already mentioned. The second Bishop was Zinzendorf, consecrated by the other two. Various subordinate ecclesiastical officers were appointed ; synodical was blended with episcopal government; a separation between the

male and female members, and an arrangement of women—married, unmarried and widows, in companies were characteristic peculiarities of the system. They left important questions to be decided by lot, used liturgical forms as well as extemporaneous prayer, and paid great attention to psalmody and music.

As early as 1717 Archbishop Wake expressed his satisfaction with what he heard of Moravian episcopal orders, and in 1728 interest was manifested in England respecting the settlement at Hernhut. Further information was sought, and accordingly David Nitschman and two others visited this country. They procured from Dr. Buddeus, a Professor in the University of Jena, a letter of introduction to Ziegenhagen, George the Second's chaplain, who did not receive them with much cordiality; but by the Countess Lippe they were welcomed with love and joy. On their return they gave a report of their journey, and read letters brought over from sympathizing friends.[1] A more important visit was paid in 1735. A German band of emigrants on their way to Georgia, in the British American dominion, were recommended by Count Zinzendorf to the Governor and Trustees of the colony. The conversion of the heathen being the principal object contemplated, the sanction of the Society for the Propagation of the

[1] Cranz's "History of the Brethren," translated by Latrobe, p. 129, and "Memoirs of James Hutton," by Benham, p. 17.

Gospel was sought on their behalf; but the royal Chaplain of the Colony opposed the plan on the ground that the Trustees wished to receive real exiles oppressed at home, not "those who were living at peace under Zinzendorf's wing." General Oglethorpe, Governor of Georgia, resisted the chaplain's arguments, and favoured the Moravian strangers; and as a result, they were introduced to the Bishop of London, which eventually proved of great importance.[1]

In January, 1737, Zinzendorf sailed from Helvoetsluys, and after a stormy passage reached London with his countess, "a woman of great seriousness and sweetness." They hired a house near the office of the Georgian Trustees, and held a religious service soon after their arrival.[2] The count had further missionary operations in his mind, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel entertained the idea that the Brethren in Georgia would be suitable to carry on work in South Carolina. A question arose whether the dominant Church in the colonies would acknowledge the order of Brethren unordained by English Bishops. The matter being referred to Archbishop Potter, he assured a deputation "that, both from their writings and from personal intercourse, . . . he had been led to the conviction, that

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[1] "Memoirs of James Hutton," p. 21.

[2] Charles Wesley's "Journal," vol. i. p. 66.

the Church of the Brethren is truly an apostolic and episcopal Church, whose doctrines contain nothing whatever militating against the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England." [1] Potter afterwards said, "that without the consent of the King, as Head of the Church, he was not at liberty to make a further acknowledgment of the orthodoxy of the Brethren, but from his heart he could advocate their cause at the peril of injuring his own."

Friendly relations being thus established, the Archbishop wrote a letter of congratulation to Zinzendorf on his appointment as Bishop, and about the same time there was a very affectionate correspondence between Zinzendorf and Doddridge.[2]

Zinzendorf's visit led to the formation in this country of a small Society of Germans, who adopted some very peculiar rules.

They related chiefly to times, places, and methods of meeting, with this very odd law in the centre: "That any who desire to be admitted into this Society, be asked, What are your reasons for desiring this? Will you be entirely open, using no kind of reserve, least of all in the case of love and courtship? Will you strive against the desire of ruling, of

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[1] "Memoirs of James Hutton," p. 24.

[2] "Doddridge's Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 264. The remarks by the editor are quite unjustifiable. The Count had his weaknesses, and his theology was far from faultless, but of his integrity and piety there can be no doubt.

being first in your company, or having your own way? Will you submit to be placed in what band the leaders will choose for you? Have you any objections to any of our orders?" These were strange terms of communion, and if Moravianism had not contained in it something better, it must have soon expired.

A Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel next appears, followed by another formidable list of rules. Afterwards, in 1741, a thorough Moravian constitution was wrought out, and a synodical conference held in Red Lion Street; also Moravian hymns were printed, and there was published a Moravian specification of doctrine.

The Brethren being interrupted in their worship, protection was sought from the Archbishop, and he granted them a license, as "German Protestants called Moravian Brethren"; but this carried with it no legal security, and they were compelled at last to seek protection as *Dissenters* under the Act of Toleration. This troubled those of them who, while fraternizing with the Brethren, wished to retain their membership in the Church of England. Nor did Zinzendorf approve of this step, for he lodged a protest against it in the Archives of Lambeth. In 1742 a document appeared with this title: "The Congregation of the Lamb with its officers and servants as settled in London, October 30th." It contained a list of members, married and single, widows

and widowers, in all seventy-two persons; the whole divided into classes or choirs, and every one, almost, appointed to some office in the brother and sisterhood, and with these arrangements the society increased, the chief promoters of Moravianism in England being James Hutton, a London bookseller, and two "Oxford Methodists," already mentioned, John Gambold and James Ingham.

Gambold did not intend to separate himself from the Church of England. He wished to retain a relationship to the national Church, and to uphold a peculiar kind of autonomy in subordination to it. This idea seems to have been carried out so far that in 1749, Wilson, the Bishop of Sodor and Man, accepted an invitation from the Moravian synod in London to undertake an office of superintendence over the Brethren. The Bishop, however, had then attained his ninety-first year, and it is not likely that at such an advanced age the relationship between him and the Moravian Brethren became anything more than a nominal one.

Gambold laboured with Hutton to promote Moravianism in London, and other parts of the country, and accounts are given of a school at Broadoaks, Essex, where schemes of education, characteristic of the community were attempted, some of the children being afterwards removed to Mile End, and others to Buttermere, in Wiltshire. In the latter place a Congregation was formed; another was planted at Bed-

ford, and missionary efforts were extended to Bath, Bristol, and Kingswood.[1]

As Gambold was active in the South, so was Ingham in the North, for he is described under the title of "The Yorkshire Evangelist." In 1742, twelve hundred persons are reported to have been, through his preaching, gathered into the Brethren's fold. A house and chapel, called Gracehall, were built at Pudsey; but the chief monument of success was at Fulneck, near Leeds, called at first *Lamb's Hill*, where a Moravian establishment still remains.[2] Ingham preached, made converts, "and left them to be ruled by others." He was "an Evangelist at large," helped by "earnest coadjutors." But all was not prosperity. Records of the Brethren, between 1745 and 1749, speak of the light and trifling spirit which had crept into almost all the congregations, both in doctrine and practice, followed by "deep shame and contrition in the hearts of the true brethren and sisters."[3]

A curious circumstance overtook the society just before the Rebellion of 1745. Some members scrupled at taking oaths, and thus became confounded with Nonjurors. They were consequently suspected of Jacobitism, and charged with being disloyal, and

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[1] See Cranz's "History," pp. 321, 354, 396.

[2] I have pleasant recollections of a visit there between 30 and 40 years ago.

[3] Tyerman's "Oxford Methodists," pp. 123, 133. In 1749 things improved.

Papists in disguise. Their secret meetings were said to be designed for the dethronement of King George and the coronation of King Charles. The rumour went abroad that at chapel doors had been unloaded chests and casks, containing fire-arms and gunpowder. Threats followed that the buildings should be destroyed, and these absurd accusations were silenced only after fruitless search for munitions of war.[1]

In 1748 the history of Moravianism crosses the path of English legislation, and that for the same reason as led the Brethren to be counted Nonjurors. They refused to take an oath. So did the Quakers, and it was now proposed to place both on the same footing. General Oglethorpe, favourably inclined towards the Brethren, pleaded their cause in the House of Commons, and an Act exempting them from taking oaths, after passing both Houses, received the royal assent.[2] But Zinzendorf wished for something beyond this, which should distinctly recognize the Episcopal orders of his Church. Accordingly, through his influence, and that of distinguished friends, the matter came before Parliament, and it was moved that a committee should be appointed to enquire into the claims of the Brethren. After two committees of

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[1] Cranz, p. 322. Hutton, in his Diary, gives an account of disturbances of this kind at Broadoaks. "Memoir, p. 135."

[2] "Memoirs of James Hutton," p. 207.

enquiry, the first of them supported by Horace Walpole, including amongst its members Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham, a favourable report was presented to the Commons; and when the measure reached the Lords the prelates gave it their sanction. "It will be an edification to myself," said Maddox, Bishop of Worcester, "and the whole Episcopal bench, and all true Protestants of England, if the British nation expresses itself in favour of the Brethren, for whatever benefit England confers upon this ancient confessor Church must be an encouragement to all evangelical Christians throughout the world, to expect nothing but good from this country." The Bill passed.[1]

After this, Bishop Sherlock acknowledged the genuine Episcopacy of Zinzendorf, but told him, after reading what he had written on the Person and Work of our Lord, "On these subjects, there are expressions in many of your hymns, which though not erroneous, yet presuppose a continual absence from all earthly things, and enraptured love to Christ, which to me seems quite impossible."[2] There are many puzzles in Moravian history, and this is one; that in the very same month, June, 1749, when the Count held loving fellowship with Sherlock, or not very long afterwards,

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[1] "Memoirs of James Hutton," pp. 211–218. All the particulars are there given.

[2] Ibid, p. 219.

the former wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury, adding a postscript, in which he charged the Bishop of London with sinning "against the first principles of uprightness, equity, and prudence." [1]

As the establishments of the Brethren for charitable purposes involved large pecuniary responsibilities, difficulties overtook them between the years 1749 and 1753. Liabilities amounted to £20,000; and, as is often the case with communities no less than individuals, poverty at the door drove love out at the window. Troubles within attracted assaults from without, and the year 1753 is described as "a year of deep distress, absolution, and reformation." [2] Better times followed, and even in the darkest hour of English Moravianism, enough remained to redeem the cause from censure; to the wonderful work of missions carried on by the Brethren, the English Moravians contributed, and in return they were stimulated and encouraged by what they heard from Greenland and the West Indies of apostolic zeal and heroic deeds, such as have excited the admiration of all Christendom ever since.

Another form of religion brought over from the Continent, under different circumstances, must not be left altogether unnoticed.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century

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[1] "Memoirs of James Hutton," p. 240.

[2] Zinzendorf. "Memoirs of James Hutton," p. 277.

Spitalfields became a French colony, and there from morning to night, from Monday to Saturday, might be heard the clack of looms producing lustrings and velvets, taffetas and silk stockings. Through the week the refugees worked, finding that the hand of the diligent maketh rich. On Sunday they rested and worshipped. An old French church in Threadneedle Street appears to have been a sort of cathedral for the early Huguenots in London, and thither for a while the Spitalfield folks were wont to repair. Other churches followed, as the French population thereabouts increased ; and within fifty years no less than eleven were built east of Bishopsgate Street. The west end of London attracted the aristocracy. There, in the Savoy, episcopal worship was celebrated in French ; and besides, several French churches existed in the court quarters, Swallow Street standing in the same relation to them that Threadneedle Street had done to the opposite extremity of the metropolis. In the register of the church, still existing, are records of noble marriages and noble births, even William III. himself in one instance appearing as godfather. It tells, too, of abjurations, and how one gave testimony of repentance, and another gave proofs of piety and morals, and how both confirmed these facts, as the register states, "by signing this record."

Amongst French clergymen, who for a while preached in this country, was James Saurin. He did not discharge ministerial duties in France before the

revocation of the Nantes edict, but at a later period, after a short military career, became a clergyman, and was called to the Hague in 1705, as minister extraordinary to the French nobles who resided there. With a handsome face, a charming expression of countenance, a commanding presence in the pulpit, sweetness and depth of voice, and gracefulness of action, he united strength of judgment, power of reasoning, and brilliancy of illustration. As a student at Geneva his preaching attracted such crowds that it became necessary on one occasion to open the cathedral for their accommodation. For a time he resided in London; and Abbadie, a French refugee, who had taken orders in the English Church, exclaimed, on hearing his fellow-countryman, "Is it a man or an angel who speaks?" Abbadie is said to have accompanied Marshal Schomberg, his friend, first to Holland, and then to England, from which we infer that he was with the marshal when he accompanied William in his voyage to Torbay, and landed in our country with the army of the Revolution. Having followed Schomberg through his Irish campaign till his death in battle on the banks of the Boyne, Abbadie accepted the chaplainship of the Savoy, and on the death of Queen Mary was appointed to deliver a funeral oration, which he accomplished with much eloquence. He entered the Established Church, and died Dean of Killaloe.

Peter Allix, polemic and historian, fled after the

Revocation, and reached London, where he appears for a time as minister of the French hospital in Spitalfields. Not eloquent like Saurin, his ministry was forcible and persuasive, and aimed, to an eminent degree, at the union of Protestant Christendom. Louis XIV., valuing his abilities and his learning, would fain have induced him to enter the Catholic Church; but he withstood temptation, and was repaid for doing so by the promotion accorded to him in the Church of England.

By the middle of the last century, French Protestantism in England was in a state of rapid decline. In 1731, the thirty London churches were reduced to twenty. Nine were closed in the interval between 1731 and 1782, when a jubilee sermon was pronounced in the French Church, Spitalfields, by Jacob Bourdillon, who then completed the fiftieth year of his ministry there. The eleven which then remained were hastening to their end. At the present day there exist but two. The naturalization of the exiles as English citizens, their adoption of the English language, their abandonment of foreign customs, their translation of former French names into Anglo-Saxon,—*Leroy* into King, *Lejeune* into Young, *Leblanc* into White, and *Lenoir* into Black,[1]—these and other circumstances

[1] "Histoire des Réfugiés Protestants," by Weiss. From this interesting work, and from Smiles' "Huguenots" most of the preceding illustrations are drawn.

led to the obliteration of old lines which separated them from their neighbours—so they forsook the French churches to attend English ones, and the descendants of the Huguenots became Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Independents.

CHAPTER XIV.

1727–1760.

JOHN Wesley was born at Epworth in 1703. Early incidents in such a life as his are noteworthy, not so much because they gratify curiosity, as because they open windows into his early consciousness, disclose traits of his original character, and present germs of influence destined to take forms of unusual magnitude and importance. His escape from the burning parsonage made an impression on his mind respecting a special providence; and familiarity with the Epworth ghost stories made him feel to the last that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy. One of the idiosyncrasies of his mind comes out in an anecdote related by him to Dr. Clarke, how, when as a child, he heard any question about what he would like to eat, he replied with cool unconcern, "Thank you, I will think of it." "John," said his mother, "will do nothing unless he can give a reason for it."[1] And in this precocious development of the logical understanding the child was father to the man. The training at the

[1] Everett's "Life of Dr. Clarke," vol. i. p. 249.

Charter House prepared Wesley to endure hardships, and suggested ideas of strict discipline which, however contrary to our notions, did not seem unreasonable to him. The Society which he gathered round him at Oxford, we have already seen. And it has been justly remarked, "had the young Fellow of Lincoln died in his thirtieth year, we can imagine that the tradition which might have preserved to Oxford the memory of the little Society, of which he was the head, would have presented itself to us as a dim foreshadowing of the religious movement connected with that University in our own day."[1] At the same time, his Oxford life had in it seeds of Methodism. Method and fellowship in religion were foundation stones in the small Society he helped to frame, and in the large Society which afterwards he fully governed.

His early impressibility, seen in tender affection for beautiful and gifted sisters, and in warm friendship for the gentler sex, prepared for a long life-habit of purest sympathy with Christian women. Letters brought to light of late years, exhibit him in correspondence under feigned names, with Mrs. Delany and her sister. He styled himself *Cyrus*, and addressed them as *Aspasia* and *Varanese*. The playful epistles which he wrote, albeit starched and stiff, like the then fashionable hoops and ruffles, place the

[1] Julia Wedgewood's "John Wesley," p. 38.

founder of Methodism under an aspect not often recognized, but needing no apology. Wesley's notes about "the dear hills, the fields, and the arbour," "the faint light of the moon glimmering through the trees," and the gracefully turned compliment, "how little would the eye of the mind that surveyed them have missed the absent sun,"[1] are youthful effusions which demonstrate natural habitudes of sentiment, throwing a mild halo around graver and still more gracious qualities in the founder of a new ecclesiastical organization.

He was ordained deacon in 1725, and in 1727 began to serve a curacy in the parish of Wroot, Lincolnshire; whence he returned to Oxford in 1729. His family wished him to succeed his father at Epworth, and steps were taken to accomplish that end, but Wesley himself felt averse to it. The fact is, he was from the beginning filled with missionary zeal. It might almost be said to have come to him by inheritance, for when he expressed a wish to preach to the North American Indians, his mother exclaimed, "Had I twenty sons, I should rejoice, were they all so employed, though I should never see them more." In later days, as he strove in all directions to make known the Gospel, he could brook no restraints such as kept his clerical brethren within certain limits, but proclaimed as his watch-word, the me-

[1] See "The Living Wesley," by Dr. Rigg, p. 72.

morable saying, inscribed on his mural monument in Westminster Abbey, "The world is my parish."

He went to Georgia in 1735, under the auspices of the Propagation Society, and out of its funds a salary was appropriated, which he scrupled to accept. These facts are recorded in the following minutes which are subjoined in full:[1]—

"At a meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts held on the 16th January, $173\frac{5}{6}$,

"A memorial of the trustees for establishing the Colony of Georgia in America was read, setting forth that the Rev. Mr. Samuel Quincy, to whom the Society had been pleased upon their recommendation to allow a salary of fifty pounds per annum, has by letter certified to the said trustees that he is desirous of leaving the Colony of Georgia, and returning home to England in the month of March next, to which they have agreed; and the said trustees recommend the Rev. Mr. John Wesley to the Society, that they would allow to him the said fifty pounds per annum from the time Mr. Quincy shall leave the said Colony, in the same manner Mr. Quincy had it.

"Agreed that the Society do approve of Mr. Wesley as a proper person to be a missionary at Georgia, and that fifty pounds per annum be allowed to Mr. Wesley, from the time Mr. Quincy's salary shall cease."

"At a meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts held on the 21st July, 1738,

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[1] I am indebted for them to my friend the Rev. W. T. Bullock, Secretary of the S.P.G.

"It was reported from the Committee that they had read a letter from the Rev. Mr. Wesley, dated Savannah, July 26th, 1737, in which he gives an account of his services among the inhabitants, and says his first design was to receive nothing of any man but food to eat and raiment to put on, and those in kind only that he might avoid as far as in him lay, worldly desires and worldly cares; but being afterwards convinced by his friends, that he ought to consider the necessities of his flock as well as his own, he thankfully accepted that bounty of the Society, which he needed not for his own personal subsistence."

Thus it appears that the bounty of the Society was accepted by Wesley, not for himself, but on account of the necessities of his flock.

His work in Georgia requires no notice on these pages—nor is it needful to dwell upon the history of the voyage, when he left England in company with certain Moravian missionaries whose influence over their new friend, as will be seen hereafter, led to a close but brief relationship between him and the United Brethren. His love affairs with Miss Hopkey, and certain consequent circumstances do not require particular notice.

"He was not, it must be confessed, *fortunate* in these affairs," says an admiring biographer; and something beyond that, many impartial readers will be disposed to add. Not many persons would write about love matters as Wesley has done in his journal, nor act in the doubtful and hesitating ways which he adopted. But they illustrate very strongly the

nature of the man, and inspire our sympathy even when we cannot commend him for his wisdom. Wise and sagacious beyond measure as he proved in many respects, it must be confessed that in some of his most innocent moods and acts, he in personal matters failed to unite the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. But is it not often the case that men, who in the larger affairs of life act with consummate ability, sharpsightedness and prudence, appear at considerable disadvantage in some of the smaller affairs of their private history? And it should be borne in mind that the whole Georgian period of Wesley's biography must be distinguished in relation to his religious character, from the far longer and more important portion of his career which came afterwards.

After Wesley's return from Georgia he connected himself with the Moravians. He speaks of their Society as "our Society,"[1] though it is important to notice, that this identification did not involve any separation from the Church of England. He esteemed the Moravians not as a sect, but as a band of brethren, who sought to promote their own edification by mutual fellowship, without renouncing their previous ecclesiastical opinions.[2] Differences afterwards arose, as might be expected; and the alienation of Wesley

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[1] Wesley's Journal, Works, vol. i. p. 247.

[2] Ibid, vol. i. p. 255.

from Zinzendorf is a painful episode, into the particulars of which I cannot enter.[1]

To understand Wesley's work we must study Wesley's experience. A comparison between him and Luther is very instructive. In both cases a large space of time is covered with a succession of confessions, which, to persons not in spiritual sympathy with the men, indicate important points of change and progress, apparently inconsistent, and extremely perplexing. Yet a fundamental difference existed between the mental characters of the two. Luther had a mind eminently intuitional, glancing with an eagle's eye at truth, whenever it rose before him, Wesley had a mind eminently logical, getting at his conclusions by paces of argument; hence it happened that Luther's theology sprung out of his experience, out of his deep felt needs and their full supply, but Wesley's experience sprung out of his theology. First convinced of certain truths, he then applied them. He learned the *doctrine* of justification by faith before he exercised the faith which, in his apprehension, brought him into a justified condition.

Wesley passed through a series of convictions. First a High Churchman, but not Ritualistic, in the present acceptation of the term, or a believer in the Real Presence; he addicted himself to ascetic prac-

[1] On the Moravian dispute, see Wesley's Works, vol. i. pp. 257, 275, 307, 326.

tices, attached great importance to fasting, maintained daily service, inculcated confession and weekly communion, re-baptised the children of Dissenters, and refused to bury those who were unwashed in the Episcopalian laver of regeneration. This phase of religious sentiment and this habit of religious practice did not, however, remain long; though a measure of the Anglo-catholic element lingered in his mind and ways through many a long year afterwards.

Mysticism for a while laid on him a strong hold, partly through the influence of William Law, and partly through the study of the "*Theologia Germanica*." But Wesley, according to his own statement, never came into the full "quietude of mysticism;" and how he emerged from under its power he could not explain; that he did, however, decidedly renounce what, in this way, he had embraced, appears from his strong language: "Mystics are the most dangerous" enemies of Christianity, "they stab it in the vitals, and its most serious professors are most likely to fall by them."

Then came another change. May 24th, 1738, was a critical period. Wesley had regarded belief, chiefly in relation to creeds, as an intellectual exercise; but now, suddenly his eyes were opened to see, that Christian faith regards a Person rather than a proposition, that it is a moral as well as an intellectual act, that it carries with it the heart no less than the judgment. He "felt his heart strangely warmed, felt

that he did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation," and "had an assurance given him that Christ had taken away his sin and saved him from the law of sin and death." Wesley's experience now became the same as that of Luther; not a dogma but spiritual life, penetrated his mind, his conscience, and his spirit.

At a fellowship meeting held in Aldersgate Street, in connection with a Church of England Society, as some one was reading Luther on the Galatians, the new light dawned on his soul, though he had been prepared for it by the teaching of his Moravian friend, Peter Böhler; and it is interesting to notice, a service he attended in St. Paul's Cathedral, the very afternoon of the same day, when he heard the anthem,—

"Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice. O let Thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord who may abide it? For there is mercy with Thee, therefore shalt Thou be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his sins."

The words harmonised with his feelings, and prepared him for what he embraced a few hours afterwards. The Cathedral of St. Paul's thus becomes connected with Wesley's "conversion,"[1] and with the origin of Methodism.

[1] Journal, May, 1738: Wesley's Works, vol. i. p. 103.

But though the change at this moment is denominated a conversion, few will believe that Wesley was altogether unconverted before.[1]

This critical change produced others. He gradually dropped his aceticism, his doctrine of apostolic succession, and a good deal also of his ecclesiastical assumption and his priestly exclusiveness.

Before proceeding any further I pause to let Wesley speak for himself on the leading topics of his theology.

"How must a man be *born again?*" he enquires. He gives no minute philosophical account of the manner, saying we are not to expect anything of that kind; and that it is with the New Birth as with the blowing of the wind.

"It is that great change which God works in the soul, when He brings it into life; when the love of the world is changed into the love of God; pride into humility; passion into meekness; hatred, envy, malice, into a sincere, tender, disinterested love for all mankind. In a word, it is that change, whereby the earthly, sensual, devilish mind is turned into the mind which was in Christ Jesus."

He insists on the necessity of the change in order to holiness, to heaven, and to present happiness. From all this, he says, it follows that Baptism is not

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[1] Smith's "History of Wesleyan Methodism," vol. i. p. 128. Also article in Contemporary Review, Sept. 1876, by Dr. Rigg.

the New Birth, it does not always accompany it, and it is not the same thing as sanctification.[1]

Another distinctive feature in his teaching is the doctrine of *Assurance*. The keynote was struck whilst he remained at Oxford.

"If we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, which He will not do unless we are regenerate, surely we must be sensible of it." "That we can never be so certain of the pardon of our sins as to be assured they will never rise up against us, I firmly believe. We know that they will infallibly do so, if we apostatize; and I am not satisfied what evidence there can be of our final perseverance till we have finished our course. But I am persuaded we may know if we are *now* in a state of salvation, since that is expressly promised in the Holy Scriptures, to our sincere endeavours, and we are surely able to judge of our own sincerity."[2]

The belief of the doctrine of assurance led in after life to his belief in the *Witness of the Spirit*.

"I observed many years ago," he says, "that it is hard to find words in the language of men to explain the deep things of God. Indeed, there are none which will adequately express what the Spirit of God works in His children. But perhaps, one might say (desiring any who are taught of God to correct, soften, or strengthen the expression) by the testimony of the Spirit I mean, an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately, and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God, that Jesus Christ has loved me and given Himself for me; and that

[1] Wesley's "Sermons," xviii. xxi.
[2] Moore's "Wesley," vol. ii. pp. 1, 2.

my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God. After twenty years further consideration, I see no cause to retract any part of this."[1]

The doctrine of *Christian Perfection* is another mark of Wesley's theology. He defined it as meaning not perfection in knowledge,—not freedom from error, mistake or infirmity; he said, it is being made perfect in love; and he dwelt much upon the words of St. John, that those who are born of God cannot commit sin. Most of Wesley's teaching on this point turns upon his interpretation of St. John's words; and that teaching cannot be fully understood without a careful perusal of all Wesley's writings on the subject.[2] Probably there is truth in what is said by one of the historians of Methodism. "Wesley's statement of the doctrine in its right analysis agrees with the highest standard of the theological world. He differed only in his clearer and more earnest promulgation of the great truth, in making it an exoteric, rather than an esoteric opinion, in declaring what other theologians taught as a possibility, the rare enjoyment of some was the privilege of all."[3]

Wesley's sermons exhibit his theology. He was strongly anti-Calvinistic, especially in later days. He opposed the doctrines of predestination and

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[1] Wesley's "Sermons," x. and xi. vol. i. p. 100.
[2] "Sermons," etc., xlii. vol. i. p. 440.
[3] Stevens' "History of Methodism," p. 692.

perseverance, as taught by Puritans of the Commonwealth; but notwithstanding, like John Goodwin, he had much spiritual feeling of the Puritan cast, which broke out in spite of all his antagonism to many points in Puritan theology. His preaching, occasionally doctrinal, was more frequently experimental and practical; but whatever the theme, the preacher's method is strictly logical. What would be called impassioned declamation is by no means frequent, though in most sermons may be found penetrating appeals and earnest expostulations. There is little imagination in his addresses; a poetical element is wanting; the style is uniformly plain, compressed, and cogent; but we ever feel it to be a sharp-edged tool, making deep incisions.[1]

Many will think that the founder of Methodism attached too great importance to certain phases of feeling; that he confounded the faith by which we are saved, with the peace, the hope, and the joy arising from that faith; that the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit, Methodistically understood, is based upon an interpretation of St. Paul's language to which critical and other objections may be fairly made; and that incautious expressions on the subject are sometimes used in Wesley's writings.

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[1] Dr. Rigg particularly notices the searching character of Wesley's "Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion," and the celebrated sermon on "Free Grace."—"The Living Wesley," p. 155.

It is visible at a glance that under his characteristic teaching there lay faith in the presence and power of the Spirit of God amongst the children of men. To many orthodox divines of the last century, as appears from their sermons, the work of the Spirit on the human soul was simply a historical fact—a thing of the past. To see it, they went back to the day of Pentecost, to the apostolic age, to the writings of St. Paul and St. John. The Spirit's work was only in the Bible. They saw little, if anything more. Wesley believed that the Spirit of God did not withdraw and leave the Church for seventeen hundred years entirely to a Divine book, and to human reason. He believed that the Comforter was sent to "*abide for ever;*" that He was giving light and life to the sons of Adam in the eighteenth century as in the first. Quakers believed this, and proclaimed it; the first Methodist did it on a larger scale, and more effectually. It is scarcely possible to estimate the power of Wesley's ministry in this respect.

Epworth is in the Isle of Axholme amidst Lincolnshire fens; yet it lies on the slope of rising ground, the upper end of which is crowned by the parish church, and from the steeple, on a clear day, both Sheffield and Lincoln may be seen. The west side of the churchyard commands a pleasant view of homesteads, cottages, and clumps of trees, and at the east end, close under a southern window of the chancel, is the grave of Samuel Wesley, the famous

rector. Hither came his son John, just before the Midsummer of 1742. It was many years since he had visited his birth-place, but he was soon recognized by an old servant; and on Sunday morning he called on the curate and offered to assist him in the service. The curate declined the Methodist's assistance, and in the afternoon, Wesley attended as a hearer, when he was doomed to listen to some offensive remarks on the mischief of enthusiasm. The application of such remarks, with such a person in the congregation, was obvious enough. As the people, who had hoped to hear their old rector's son, were pouring out of the church, a notice was given by one John Taylor, standing at the door: "Mr. Wesley, not being permitted to preach in the church, designs to preach here at six o'clock." At six o'clock the churchyard was filled with a multitude from the neighbourhood, when Wesley, standing on his father's tombstone, took for his text, "The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." It was because he could not preach in the church, that he preached in the open air. He loved the parish temples of England. He loved in particular that at Epworth, with its old grey tower and its rustic interior, where he had worshipped as a boy and seen his father in the pulpit. Hence he was forced into a position like that which in after life he habitually assumed, and having preached once at Epworth, outside the build-

ing, he determined to repeat this throughout the week. For seven successive evenings after the first, the inhabitants of the town and adjacent villages gathered about the familiar hillocks and gravestones, and the Methodist preacher was each evening at his post. "By grace are ye saved through faith"—"Unto him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justified the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness"—"God be merciful to me a sinner"—"Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father"—Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones, and the Sermon on the Mount — these were the texts and subjects on which he preached on those June evenings, as the sun went down over the tops of the houses, and the gathering shadows made the solemn stillness of those never-to-be-forgotten hours still more solemn. That week's work will live in the history of the Church in England as long as the world lasts. Every day was filled up with religious labours. Round about the neighbourhood Wesley went, revisiting the scenes of his boyhood, and preaching everywhere. Some of his hearers were carried off in wagon loads to a Justice of the Peace. "What have they done?" asked his worship. "Why they pretend to be better than other people; and, besides, they pray from morning to night." "But have they done nothing beside?" "Yes, sir," exclaimed an old man; "An't please your worship

they have *convarted* my wife. Till she went among them, she had such a tongue, and now she is as quiet as a lamb." "Carry them back," replied the Justice, "and let them convert all the scolds in the town." On the Saturday night, as the people were wending their way out of the churchyard, Wesley observing a gentleman who had not attended public worship for thirty years, asked him, "Sir, are you a sinner?" He replied "with a deep and broken voice, 'sinner enough,' and continued staring upwards till his wife and a servant or two, who were all in tears, put him into his chaise and carried him home." With the impression made by these sermons Wesley was the more satisfied, because he considered that it was the result, not simply of what was said at the time, but of earlier appeals made by his father and himself years before—apparently all in vain. Much in the story of that week was significant, beyond the open air preaching, and the incessant daily labour. There were outbursts of excitement in the churchyard typical of what often occurred under Wesley's ministry. "Several dropped down as dead," and among the rest such a cry was heard of "sinners groaning for the righteousness of faith as almost drowned the preacher's voice." And perhaps the very position of the preacher at the time was not without its significance.[1]

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[1] "He took his stand upon his father's tomb—on the vener-

The impression produced by Wesley's manner of address is well described by Dr. Kennicott at the time he heard him at Oxford in 1744.

"'His black hair,' he says, 'quite smooth, and parted very exactly, added to a peculiar composure in his countenance, showed him to be an uncommon man.' He speaks of his 'agreeable emphasis' in reading. He refers with approval to 'many just invectives' in his sermon, but with disapproval to 'the zeal and unbounded satire with which he fired his address when he came to what he called his plain, practical conclusion.' If 'his censures' had only been 'moderated,' and certain portions omitted, Kennicott says, 'I think his discourse, as to style and delivery, would have been uncommonly pleasing to others as well as myself.' He adds, 'he is allowed to be a man of great parts.'" [1]

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able and ancestral traditions of the country and the Church. That was the stand from which he addressed the world; it was not from the points of disagreement, but from the points of agreement with them in the Christian religion, that he produced those great effects which had never since died out in English Christendom. It was because of his having been in that age, which he was inclined to think had been unduly disparaged—because in the past century he had been the reviver of religious fervour amongst their Churches, that they all felt they owed a debt of gratitude to him, and felt that he deserved to have his monument placed amongst those of the benefactors of England."—*Dean Stanley's Speech at the unveiling of the Wesley Monument in Westminster Abbey.*

[1] Tyerman's "Wesley," vol. i. p. 449, and Rigg's "Living Wesley," pp. 169, 170.

We must now turn to look at Wesley's illustrious coadjutor.

George Whitefield bears away the palm from all rivals in pulpit oratory during the eighteenth century. Perhaps no man of any age in the world's history was exactly him. Certainly he and Wesley together did a work such as had never been done before. Bunyan and Baxter had gathered immense congregations. The Reformers at St. Paul's Cross had seen London citizens swarming like bees round the stone pulpit. Luther had filled the churches of Wittenberg, and other cities in Saxony: Tauler at Strasburg, Bernard in many a cathedral, had attracted multitudes. The preachers of Greek Christendom had produced wonderful effects in Antioch and Constantinople; but Wesley and Whitefield were the first great preachers in both hemispheres of this terrestrial globe. Whitefield was as popular in America as in England. He crossed the Atlantic seven times, roused from torpor, there as well as here, Churches of all denominations, and by his own voice, so far as human instrumentality was concerned, converted thousands on thousands from the error of their ways. No one man before him had ever come into immediate contact with so many minds; no one voice had ever rung in so many ears; no one ministry had ever touched so many hearts. The *depth* of the impression produced is as wonderful as its *extent*. People were not merely interested, persuaded, con-

vinced, but they were quickened with a new kind of life. Whatever theory of explanation be adopted, whether evangelical or rationalistic, here were masses on masses from time to time penetrated, and changed in character and conduct. Say that it was mere excitement; still the fact remains, that no such an excitement by preaching had ever in this country been produced before.

Whitefield, like Wesley, underwent a great change of religious experience after his ordination; he was converted, he said, and the story of his spiritual life must be pondered by any one who would understand the nature of his ministry. Thus he describes his conversion:—

"About the end of the seventh week, after having undergone innumerable buffetings of Satan, and many months' inexpressible trials, by night and day, under the spirit of bondage; God was pleased at length to remove the heavy load—to enable me to lay hold of His dear Son by a living faith, and, by giving me the spirit of adoption, to seal me, as I humbly hope, even to the day of everlasting adoption. But oh, with what joy—joy unspeakable, even joy that was full of and big with glory, was my soul filled when the weight of sin went off, and an abiding sense of the pardoning love of God, and a full assurance of faith broke in upon my disconsolate soul. At first my joys were like a spring tide; and, as it were, overflowed the banks. So when I would, I could not avoid singing of psalms almost aloud: afterwards they became more settled, and, blessed be God, saving a few casual intervals, have abode and increased in my soul ever since."

The difference between Wesley and Whitefield is here apparent. Whitefield was not so self-critical as his friend. He did not bring himself before so severe a tribunal. There was in him less of judicial scrutiny; more of vehement passion. The two characters are marked throughout—distinguishing each life and each ministry from that of the other. Whitefield was more impulsive, more demonstrative than Wesley. Both excited feelings in the minds of vast multitudes —Wesley, with perfect control over himself, was calm and quiet amidst the storm he roused; Whitefield, a subject of the excitement he produced, was borne away with his hearers in one deep flood of religious emotion.

His popularity began as soon as he was ordained.

"Some few," he says, "mocked; but most for the present seemed struck, and I have since heard that a complaint had been made to the bishop that I drove fifteen mad the first sermon. The worthy prelate, as I am informed, wished that the madness might not be forgotten before next Sunday."

Whitefield preceded Wesley as a field preacher; and he does not seem to have felt any reluctance to this mode of usefulness. It seems to have accorded with his taste. The beginning of his out-door services, as it occurred in London, is thus described by his first biographer:—

"The thing being new and singular, he found, on coming out of the coach, an incredible number of people assembled. Many had told him that he should never come out of that

place alive. He went in, however, between two friends, who, by the pressure of the crowd, were soon parted from him entirely, and obliged to leave him to the mercy of the rabble. But these, instead of hurting him, formed a lane for him, and carried him along to the middle of the field, where a table had been placed (which was broken in pieces by the crowd), and afterwards back again to the wall that then parted the upper and lower Moorfields, from which he preached, without molestation, to an exceeding great multitude in the lower fields."

On returning from his first visit to America, he preached to the Kingswood colliers. Ten thousand people were present. Trees and hedges were covered with multitudes waiting to hear this strange clergyman.

"To behold such crowds standing together in awful silence, and to hear the echo of their singing run from one end of them to the other was very solemn and striking." "The first discovery of their being affected was to see the *white gutters* made by their tears, which plentifully fell down their black faces, black as they came out of the coal pits. Hundreds and hundreds of them were soon brought under deep conviction, which, as the event proved, ended in a sound and thorough conversion."[1]

Stinchcombe Hill in Gloucestershire commands a magnificent panorama. To the west and north is the broad Severn. Beyond spreads the Forest of Dean, and on the south are the blue Welsh mountains. Nearer, on the left bank, there lie concealed the grey

[1] See Southey's "Wesley," and Gillies' "Life of Whitefield."

town and castle of Berkeley. On the east is the long range of Cotswold hills. On the landscape may be mapped out seven counties, and a keen eye may pick out amidst woods and villages no less than thirty steeples.

In the middle of the last century, the hill was alive with crowds of people. They came from Berkeley, Dursley, Wotton-under-Edge, Minchinhampton, Tetbury, and places more remote. There were labouring men of all sorts, old and young, in rustic guise, with wives and daughters, and a sprinkling of the better sort of folks, in beaver hats and silken hoods. Hundreds and thousands came to hear Whitefield preach. There he was, mounted on a horseblock, with hands lifted up to heaven. He proclaimed to the multitude the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, and insisted on the necessity of the new birth. He declared what he believed, in alternate bursts of the terrific and the tender, which moved the audience like tree-tops in the wind. His doctrine sounded strange to some; and to all, the discourse seemed amazingly different from what they had heard the previous Sunday, in the Parish Church or the Presbyterian Meeting-house.

Whitefield was no master of logic, nor did he possess the faculty of imagination in any high degree. He had a great deal of ready power. Quick and agile in his mental movements, ready of utterance, never "stumbling on a word," apt and dexterous in turns

of thought, expert in the use of interrogatories, exclamations, and apostrophes, capable of packing up his ideas in short unmistakable sentences, and, endowed with wonderful histrionic power, he had qualities which would have made him a great actor. Besides, he scrupled not at times to indulge in humour. "Ay sure," said an aged listener, "he was a jolly brave man; and what a look he had when he put out his hand thus," suiting the action to the word, "to rebuke a disturber as tried to stop him under the pear-tree. The man had been threatening and noisy —but he could not stand the look. Off he rode; and Whitefield said, 'There he goes, empty barrels make most din.'"

Whitefield was an innovator, and excited imitation. Others kindled lamps at his torch, his own he lighted himself. The habits of ministers, the inconsistency of many, the apathy of more, aroused an indignation, which in his early days he was not slow to express. Often, as might be expected in a man of impulsive temperament, there was a lack of discrimination in his censures; he could be very uncharitable, and the bolts of his anger flew thick and fast. This habit of criticizing others gave spice to his sermons, which heightened their flavour to the taste of many, since there are always people to whom fault-finding oratory is exceedingly delightful. Whitefield had his infirmities, and, as in the case of other popular men, even infirmities contributed to influence and renown.

Methodist preaching in the open air offended the advocates of Church order. Other irregularities provoked displeasure. John Wesley and his brother Charles once waited upon Gibson, Bishop of London, to explain their conduct and to conciliate his favour. He received them kindly ; and when they pressed upon him a certain matter, no other than the rebaptism of Dissenters, indicating how much of High Church feeling they still retained,—when they urged that silent permission in other cases of irregularity had been taken for authority, and that his lordship allowed it to be so, he said, "It is one thing to connive, and another to approve ; I have power to inhibit you." "Does your lordship exert that power ? Do you now inhibit me ?" The answer implied more than it expressed, "Why will you press matters to an extreme ?" On another occasion Charles Wesley says, "He showed us great affection, and cautioned us to give no more umbrage than was necessary for our own defence ; to forbear exceptionable phrases, and to keep to the doctrines of the Church." The writer adds, "We told him we expected persecution, and would abide by the Church till her Articles and Homilies were repealed. He assured us he knew of no design in the governors of the Church to innovate, neither should there be any innovation while he lived." Gibson afterwards showed himself less friendly towards Methodists, for he condemned the system in a pastoral letter, and in one of his episcopal charges.

But Lavington, Bishop of Exeter, in his "Methodists and Papists compared," published in 1749, went far beyond his brother of London. He called the followers of Wesley "a dangerous and presumptuous sect, animated with an enthusiastical and fanatical spirit," and talked of their "sanctified singularities and low fooleries." The preachers were strolling mendicants, "the windmill was in all their heads."[1] This was not all. Violence was added to abuse and scorn. The Methodists were not treated as the Puritans and early Nonconformists had been. Persecution did not proceed from ecclesiastical courts, as in the reigns of the first two Stuarts; nor from Parliamentary Acts, as under Charles II. and James II.; sometimes, however, the enmity of magistrates, and sometimes the opposition of the clergy, but more frequently the violence of angry multitudes, inflicted upon the followers of the two great revivalists immense suffering. They were mobbed, hooted, pelted, knocked down, and nearly killed. Stories of Wesleyan confessorship are very numerous. Town after town is mentioned as the scene of riotous and cruel conduct; and Wednesbury is particularly noticeable, where preachers were held under water till they were almost drowned; and women were treated in such a way that they never recovered. Houses were attacked; goods were destroyed; and in the place are still preserved frag-

[1] Southey's "Wesley," vol. i. p. 136.

ments of furniture smashed by the rabble.[1] Times changed before Wesley's death; after having in his first visit to Cornwall narrowly escaped with life, his last visit to that part of England was a perfect ovation.

The most furious enemies of Methodism were either men of no religion at all, or men whose religion must have been no less fanatical than that of the worst and weakest of their victims. Clerical magistrates and unmagisterial clergymen made themselves conspicuous in this respect,[2] and the violence of Dissenters can no more be concealed than the violence of Churchmen. Instances occur, but they are rare, of the former assailing open-air preachers. Generally, however, if they had any animosity, it was manifested in other ways. Nonconformists with doctrinal views opposed to those of the Wesleys, might conscientiously condemn what they held to be erroneous; probably, in some cases, they were tempted to impugn the motives of the revivalists, and to circulate tales of scandal. Sober London ministers disliked street preaching. The trustees of Mr. Coward[3] wrote to Dr. Doddridge so as to show that they disapproved of his inviting Whitefield to occupy his pulpit.[4]

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[1] Watson's "Life of Wesley," p. 111.

[2] See "Lives of Early Methodist Preachers," vol. i. pp. 29 and 80. Watson's "Life of Wesley," pp. 133–137.

[3] See page 341.

[4] "Doddridge's Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 292.

Great fear of fanaticism existed amongst certain sober-minded men in the metropolis; also great fear of Arminianism on the part of zealous Calvinists. But eminent leaders of Nonconformity hailed the warm-hearted evangelists as helpers and examples, as harbingers of coming good, the heralds of "a new ministration of Christianity." "When Whitefield sat at the bedside of Watts, and in his frequent intercourse with Doddridge, and when he and the Wesleys, as often happened, were welcomed in the houses of the Dissenters—that is to say such Dissenters as Williams of Kidderminster—they may be thought of as then tacitly receiving a charge, and as being invested with a commission to do effectively what these good men had not been in a position to attempt. Yet it was with a lively satisfaction that they preached the dawn of a brighter day. They gave Methodism their blessing, and died rejoicing in hope." [1]

In connection with it were certain forms of excitement, which require a passing notice. People sunk into convulsions; drops of sweat ran down the face; all the bones of the body shook; one person after another fell to the earth as if thunderstruck. Sometimes it took two or three men to hold one in a state of paroxysm. It is remarkable that such phenomena chiefly attended the preaching of John Wesley. They occurred in connection with the sermons of George

[1] Isaac Taylor's "Wesley and Methodism," p. 137.

Whitefield, on an occasion when he was labouring with his friend at Bristol; but not before nor afterwards, as it would seem.[1] It is singular that the less impassioned oratory of Wesley was for a while commonly followed by physical disturbances which did not appear after the discourses of Whitefield. Whitefield did not approve of such manifestations, nor did Charles Wesley. Indeed, by his decided opposition, the latter effectually overcame them.[2]

The facts now recorded have puzzled biographers and historians. They go beyond what we read of as taking place on the day of Pentecost, when the hearers were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the Apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And the most furious of the agitations do not resemble demoniacal possessions in the time of our Lord, when two distinct personalities, the human and the satanic, seemed at strife in the same tortured soul. Cries of awakened sinners, under Wesley's appeals, expressed their own consciousness, not the acts of another struggling within them. It would be difficult to reconcile the incidents of the Wesleyan revival, as just described, with any theory of Divine or diabolical origin. The phenomena appear to belong to a class of experiences coming within the range of causes really natural, though

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[1] Southey's "Life of Wesley," vol. i. p. 172.
[2] Ibid., vol. i. p. 187.

never explained. Medical authorities speak of "hysteria, regular and irregular;" "of morbid conditions of the emotional nature, seeking for outlets;" and of "pent-up forces producing paroxysmal fits." These expressions do not afford much help, but they point to mysteries in the constitution of man. Physiologists have not explored all, or nearly all, which that manifold constitution is made to contain; and, as in other realms of nature, so doubtless in this, occult powers are waiting to be discovered.

Serious differences arose, about 1740, between the two leaders, respecting doctrinal questions. Whitefield could not agree with Wesley in his views of Christian perfection. Wesley could not agree with Whitefield in his views of Divine predestination. Each of them failed to look at truth from the same standpoint as that occupied by the other; nor did either avoid what is incident to all theological controversy, the error and injustice of attributing to an opponent consequences which, however apparently logical, that opponent distinctly disavows. It is enough now to remark, that Whitefield, at first, was loath to enter into controversy with his friend; that Wesley first published on the subject of Calvinism; that Whitefield then retaliated on Wesley the charge of false doctrine, in a very provoking style; that the dispute became complicated by the interference of others; and that Whitefield made public the fact of Wesley's deciding to publish, in consequence of drawing a lot, and of his

also having put to the same test another and a personal question. These were private transactions which Whitefield had no business to proclaim to the world; and when he afterwards saw his error he made an ample apology. Happily, after a long separation, during which the two revivalists pursued different paths of action, they were reconciled, and treated each other as friends.

CHAPTER XV.

1740-1760.

METHODISM, in its original form, assumed no attitude of opposition to the Church, on the contrary, the Wesleys professed themselves its servants and sons; as for Charles, he remained much more completely than his brother John in communion with the Establishment to the end of his days. Methodism, as an organization outside the National Church, was the result of circumstances more than of design; its development rose out of no fixed plan, but rather resembled the growth of the English Constitution.

A superficial likeness between the Society of John Wesley, and the Society of Ignatius Loyola, has laid hold on some imaginations, so as to mislead their judgment. The founder of Methodism, like the author of Jesuitism, was a man of rare administrative ability, and the extent, stability, and permanence of the system rival those of the Roman institute; the order and regularity of proceedings in the one case may be compared with the steady methodical action of the other. There the likeness stops; divergences branch into contrasts. As to history, what has

been said about the origin of Methodism in Wesley's mind, and the discipline of circumstances leading to unanticipated consequences, presents a story opposed to that of Jesuitism, which began with rearing a new order, according to a definite plan framed from the beginning. The theory that Wesley determined on an ambitious scheme for rivalling other denominations is now exploded: that Ignatius Loyola designed to create a new institution is an indisputable fact. As to aims, Methodism sprung from a simple desire to save souls, however, in the estimation of some of its critics, it may have involved fanaticism. It pointed to no political ends, it contemplated no intrigues for the attainment of social influence, it embraced no schemes of literary and scientific culture: such objects were compassed and prominently kept in view by the Jesuit Fathers. As to principles, Methodist doctrine is as much opposed to those of Loyola, as Luther's doctrine is to that of Rome; and Methodist discipline, whatever the defects charged upon it, is thoroughly free from intolerance with regard to other denominations, its constant maxim having been, "the friend of all, and the enemy of none."

In describing the organization of Methodism, it is difficult to say what was the precise date of its origin. Wesley began with no fixed theory. The theory of Methodism has grown out of its practice. He spoke of meetings at Oxford in 1729; of meetings in his

own house at Savannah, 1736; of meetings in Fetter Lane in 1738; and of the United Society in 1739, as the beginnings of Methodism. Hence he must himself have thought that the planting of the vineyard extended over at least ten years.

It is plain that certain arrangements can be traced back to those of the United Brethren. "*Bands*," by which are meant small gatherings of persons, described "as walking in the light of God," appear among the earliest features of the body; and this close and intimate kind of friendship had been previously cultivated at Fetter Lane. "*Love Feasts*," in imitation of the Agapæ, in their original simplicity, are very noticeable in the early stages of Wesleyanism, as they are in the early history of Zinzendorf's brotherhood. Added to these, there were two religious services which seem to be original. The "*Watch Night*," and the "*Covenant Meeting*,"[1] the first usually beginning at eventide with a sermon, and continued by singing, exhortation, and prayers until the midnight hour; the second, a solemn engagement made at a meeting of members, to serve God with their whole heart and soul.

The first Methodist chapel built was at Bristol in 1739; the second, the Foundery, Moorfields, London, in the same year. Lay preaching gradually arose. The earliest step is seen in the appointment by Wes-

[1] Smith's "Hist. of Wesleyan Methodism," vol. i. pp. 253, 271.

ley of persons engaged in secular business, to read and expound the Scriptures, without any exercise of clerical functions, to which he was decidedly averse. Then followed the separation of such agents from worldly callings, with the employment of their whole time in religious service. Thomas Maxfield was of this description, and during one of Wesley's absences from London he began to preach. "Thomas Maxfield," said John Wesley to his mother, "has turned preacher, I find." He did not like it. "Take care what you do with respect to that young man," she replied, "for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are."[1] Such words from a High Churchwoman startled her son, and he reluctantly, very reluctantly, sanctioned lay preaching.

The main characteristic peculiarities of the organization are found in the Class, the Conference, and the Circuit.

The Class. Church of England Societies at the close of the seventeenth century might appear at first sight, precursors of this institution; but on closer inspection a radical difference is detected between them. Admission to the Church by *baptism* lay at the basis of the earlier Societies; but admission to Class by the experience of *conversion*, or by the desire of such an experience, formed the corner-stone of Wesleyanism. "The-birth day of a Christian was

[1] Moore's "Life of Wesley."

already shifted from his baptism to his conversion, and in that change the partition line of two great systems is crossed."[1] The Class would somewhat resemble the Oxford private gatherings; yet they, like the earlier Societies, insisted decidedly on baptism as the entrance gate. The Moravians, indeed, had their Band Meetings, but Classes differed from them; and among Moravians, Band Meetings merged into Classes.[2] Classes were composed of Methodist converts, meeting together under the presidency of a lay leader, who prayed with them, asked questions, and, according to the answers, added advice to each individual. At first the leader visited each person at home; but that practice being found inconvenient, the persons under his charge were gathered into a company, required to meet in one particular place.[3] Classes were regarded by the founder as "the sinews of his Societies."[4] He was a practical man, and soon added a practical measure.

"I was talking with several of the Society in Bristol (15th February, 1742) concerning the means of paying the debts there, when one stood up and said, 'Let every member of the Society give a penny a week, till all are paid.' Another answered, 'But many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it.' 'Then,' said he, 'put eleven of the poorest

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[1] "John Wesley," by Julia Wedgewood, p. 157.
[2] "Memoirs of Hutton," p. 130.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. viii. p. 256.
[4] Smith's "Hist. of Wesleyan Methodism," vol. i. p. 633.

with me; and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbours weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting.' It was done."[1]

The Conference is another element of the system. "In 1744, I wrote," says Wesley, "to several clergymen, and to all who then served me as sons in the Gospel, desiring them to meet me in London, and to give me their advice concerning the best method of carrying on the work of God." That was the first Conference that ever was held, and amongst those who obeyed the summons, were his brother Charles, and a beneficed minister from the Isle of Man. Clerical assistance John Wesley highly valued, and procured it whenever he was able; but on this occasion he had mainly to depend on four lay preachers, including Thomas Maxfield.[2] The business proposed and decided was, in this case, and in all subsequent ones, reported in the form of question and answer.

During the sixteen years included in this section of Methodist history, several important subjects were decided. In 1745, ecclesiastical principles came under discussion—the Episcopal, the Presbyterian, and the Independent systems were reviewed, in by no means an antagonistic spirit, but rather so as to indicate a

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[1] Smith's "History of Wesleyan Methodism," vol. i. p. 188.
[2] Ibid. p. 210.

recognition in each, of something true, good and wise. In 1747, the National Church is called "a merely political institution." In 1753 it was determined that predestinarian preachers should no longer occupy the pulpits of the Society. In 1755 it was pronounced inexpedient to leave the Established Church; and in 1756 Wesley and his brother solemnly resolved never to separate from it.[1]

The Circuit does not appear until after two Conferences had been held. The first record of such an arrangement comes before us in the minutes of 1746.[2] Circuits were filled by lay preachers, called *Itinerants*, who devoted their whole time to the ministry, and received in return a scanty allowance. They were appointed at Conference meetings, and changed from place to place after a period of one or two years. With them were associated other laymen, who continued to obtain a livelihood by secular employment, while they devoted what time they could to preaching and other spiritual work. They were designated *Local Preachers*, because they were limited to certain spots. Each Itinerant was to have a horse and a pair of saddle-bags, containing a Bible, a hymn-book, and a limited wardrobe. Neatness in dress was enjoined as a duty: in this respect they were required to imitate their founder, who was the opposite of a sloven, and

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[1] Smith's "Hist." vol. i., under the respective dates.
[2] Ibid.

used to say, "Cleanliness is next to godliness." Their well-brushed coats were often threadbare; and the elder travellers were wont to put on large wigs and three-cornered hats, after the professional fashion of the age, so as to be recognised wherever they went. From Monday to Saturday, from sunrise to sundown, they were on the move, scouring hill and dale, the broad turnpike, and the narrow lane. Sometimes they were hissed and hooted at as they crossed a village green; sometimes they were welcomed in the farmer's homestead as messengers of mercy. Where a Methodist chapel existed they occupied it; but more frequently in early days they had to be satisfied with a horse-block as a pulpit in the open air, or with an empty barn, a good-sized kitchen, or the largest room in a labourer's cottage.

I have room for only one specimen of the heroes of early Methodism.

"On Sunday, August 7th," says John Mitchell, "I came to Wrangle very early in the morning. I preached as usual at five. About six, two constables came, at the head of a large mob. They violently broke in upon the people, seized upon me, pulled me down, and took me to a public-house, where they kept me till four o'clock in the afternoon. Then one of the constables seemed to relent, and said, 'I will go to the minister and inquire of him whether we may not now let the poor man go.' When he came back he said, 'They were not to let him go yet.' So he took me out to the mob, who presently hurried me away, and threw me into a pool of standing water. It took me up to the

neck. Several times I strove to get out, but they pitched me in again. They told me I must go through it seven times. I did so, and then they let me come out. When I had got upon dry ground, a man stood ready with a pot full of white paint. He painted me all over from head to foot; and then they carried me into a public-house again. Here I was kept till they had put five more of our friends into the water. Then they came and took me out again, and carried me to a great pond, which was railed in on every side, being ten or twelve feet deep. Here, four men took me by my legs and arms, and swung me backward and forward. For a moment I felt the flesh shrink; but it was quickly gone. I gave myself up to the Lord, and was content His will should be done. They swung me two or three times, and then threw me as far as they could into the water. The fall and the water soon took away my senses, so that I felt nothing more. But some of them were not willing to have me drowned. So they watched till I came above water, and then catching hold of my clothes with a long pole, made shift to drag me out."[1]

At first the Circuits had no links of connection with one another, or with any central point. At the Conference in 1749, the defect was supplied. The Society in London came to be regarded as the Mother Church, and information had to be sent up to the officers there, of what went on in other localities. Annual collections were appointed for assistance to needy congregations, and a superintendent was placed over Circuits, to conduct the general administration of

[1] "Lives of Early Methodist Preachers," vol. i. p. 249.

affairs. These superintendents were denominated "*assistants*," and co-operated with Wesley, who appears as superintendent in chief of the London circuit. Soon afterwards stewards were appointed, a class of officers who paid the expenses of travelling preachers, and otherwise looked after their pecuniary support. Thus, by slow elaboration from point to point, the machinery of the connection came to be constructed; one part was made to harmonize with another, according to that inventive skill which distinguished the father of the whole fellowship.

It was no mere machine, but a living organism that he brought into existence. Its healthy exercise needed a current of spiritual emotion; and what the blood is to the human frame, hymnology has been to Wesleyanism, a source of life and power. Almost all the Wesleys were able to think in verse, but in the poetic gift Charles rose above the rest. The number of his hymns is truly amazing, for they amount altogether to seven thousand.[1] But this is small praise; indeed, his most ardent admirers must allow he wrote too much. Yet, with all their imperfections, they are unrivalled. There are hymns of smoother versification and pervaded by a serener spirit—more suited to Anglo-Catholics, and perhaps to sedate Nonconformists; but for light and life, force and

[1] They have been collected and carefully edited in thirteen volumes, by Dr. Osborn.

fire, no compositions can compare with those of the Methodist poets. They bear distinctly a character of their own, and reflect the excitement out of which they rose. Perhaps at times Isaac Watts may have surpassed them in calm grandeur of conception, and Philip Doddridge in tenderness of sentiment; but beyond anything in either, there are in Charles Wesley's hymns tones of conflict and victory which resemble the voice of a trumpet, and strains of praise like the sound of many waters.

The earliest hymns, published in 1739, were mostly accommodations from other English authors, or translations from German bards. In 1740 appeared a second and similar collection. In 1741 followed other volumes, in one of which a number of pieces are taken from Watts; and another, containing hymns on *God's Everlasting Love*, assumes a polemical aspect in reference to the tenets of Calvinism. In 1742 we have *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, including the matchless lyric of *Jacob Wrestling with the Angel.* If some compositions rose out of controversy, others sprung out of persecution. Hymns for times of trouble were published in 1744, some of them plaintive and patient, others ringing with trumpet-notes of defiance and victory. It is easy to imagine a band of Methodists, threatened by the rabble, taking up the hymn, appointed "to be sung in a tumult," which begins with these triumphant lines:—

"Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,
And publish abroad His wonderful Name:
The name all-victorious of Jesus extol;
His Kingdom is glorious, and rules over all.

The waves of the sea have lift up their voice,
Sore troubled that we in Jesus rejoice;
The floods they are roaring, but Jesus is here,
While we are adoring, He always is near."

The sentiment excels the versification; and we recognise in it an outburst of faith and fortitude which will bear favourable comparison with the choral songs of the Athanasians, as they marched through the streets of Constantinople confessing their trust in the Divine Redeemer. As a further example it is very interesting to place one of Charles Wesley's hymns and an entry in his Journal side by side. In June 1745, he writes:—

"Now the power and the blessing came. My mouth and their hearts were opened. The rocks were broken in pieces, and melted into tears on every side. I continued exhorting them from seven till ten, to save themselves from this untoward generation. We could hardly part. I left the little society of twenty members confirmed and comforted."

The 84th hymn in the Wesleyan Hymn Book was composed on this occasion, beginning thus,—

"Come, O Thou all-victorious Lord!
Thy power to us make known;
Strike with the hammer of Thy word,
And break these hearts of stone.

"Oh that we all might now begin
Our foolishness to mourn;
And turn at once from every sin,
And to our Saviour turn!

"Give us ourselves and Thee to know,
In this our gracious day;
Repentance unto life bestow,
And take our sins away."

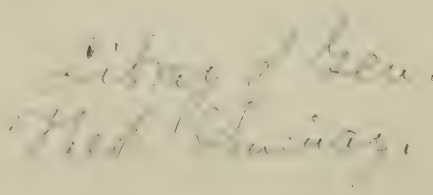
Of funeral hymns there are a first, a second, and a third series. "In deaths oft," the Wesleys and their companions realized, as few have done, the nearness of the eternal world, and its mysteries of light and glory. When friends dropped off, they followed them to the grave, not with mourning, lamentation, and woe, but in the full assurance of hope. The first two verses of the second Funeral hymn breathe an ecstatic joy in the midst of tribulation, rarely equalled, never surpassed:—

"Rejoice for a brother deceased,
Our loss is his infinite gain;
A soul out of prison released,
And freed from its bodily chain;
With songs let us follow his flight,
And mount with his spirit above,
Escaped to the mansions of light,
And lodged in the *Eden* of love.

Our brother the haven hath gained,
Out-flying the tempest and wind,
His rest he hath sooner obtained,
And left his companions behind;

Still tossed on a sea of distress,
Hard toiling to make the blest shore,
Where all is assurance and peace,
And sorrow and sin are no more."

The history of Methodist hymnology shows any one who reads it what a mighty inspiration it was to the body at the beginning, and has been ever since. Strains full of life became familiar to the members as household words, and were sung in the little chapel, on the hill-side, amidst the crowded street, by the ingle nook of the cottager, by the bedside of the dying, in the funeral procession, and on the brink of the grave. Perhaps no other Church has ever lived and moved and had its being in such an atmosphere of sacred song.



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